

COPY

PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

J. Gresham Machen  
P.O. Address - Box 4, Princeton, N.J.

May 4, 1929.

Dr. Robert E. Speer  
The Board of Foreign Missions  
Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.,  
156 Fifth Avenue  
New York, N.Y.

My dear Dr. Speer:

Please let me thank you for your letter of April 30th, which has come into my hands today. I am exceedingly grateful for the careful way in which you have commented upon my paper, -- CAN EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANS SUPPORT OUR FOREIGN BOARD?

I wish that I could say that your letter had removed my objections to the policy of the Board of Foreign Missions, but in point of fact it has tended rather to the confirmation of those objections. My reply in detail will have to be deferred until I can give the considerations adduced in the letter the detailed examination which they certainly deserve. Meanwhile I am deferring publication of my paper.

The appeal for peace in the Church and between us, with which your letter closes, seems rather strange at a time when you are actively engaged in the attack upon the conservative control of Princeton Seminary and in the effort to substitute the policy favored by the President for the policy which the institution is bound by the most solemn trust obligations to maintain. The policy of tolerance hardly seems to work both ways. The conservatives are not only to tolerate in the Church but also to give active support to the message that you proclaim; while you, on the other hand, are engaged in destroying almost the last remaining powerful agency which the conservatives possess for the propagation of their Faith in the Presbyterian Church.

Very sincerely yours,

(Signed) J. Gresham Machen.

PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
PRINCETON, N. J. 08542

April 1-, 1929

Mr. Robert A. Speer,  
The Board of Foreign Missions  
Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.  
157 Fifth Avenue, New York City

My dear Mr. Speer:

You will no doubt remember that in 1926 you and Dr. Marquis were in correspondence with me regarding my criticism of the Boards of Foreign and National Missions. The correspondence embraced your letters (signed jointly by you and by Dr. Marquis) of March 24, April 8, May 6, June 18, Dr. Marquis' letter of October 6, and my letters of March 30, April 30, May 15, August 9, and October 29. A similar subject was dealt with by Dr. John McDowell's letter of January 15, 1927, and by my reply of January 27, 1927, which reply, since it dealt chiefly with the Board of Foreign Missions, Dr. McDowell had my express permission to show to you.

May I call your attention, also, to a correspondence which I have had with the Rev. Lindsay S.B. Hadley, Candidate Secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions -- a correspondence embracing my letters of February 27, March 7, April 7, 1928 and March 5, 1929, and Mr. Hadley's letters of March 1, March 8, April 13, 1928, and March 28, 1929. In the last letter Mr. Hadley refers me to you and to Dr. Brown. No doubt, to refer, I am not acting contrary to his wishes when I bring the correspondence to your attention.

In my letter to you of March 30, 1926, I mentioned my intention "to prepare a statement which will set forth more in detail my views on the subject of the Boards and will ground my objections to their policy more fully than was possible in a general address."

This intention I have been as yet unable, because of the press of other duties, to carry out in any comprehensive way. But my objections to the policy of the Foreign Board have not become less but rather greater than in 1926; and there are certain phases of the subject which I am inclined to think ~~that~~ that I ought immediately to bring to the attention of persons of evangelical conviction in the Presbyterian Church.

Accordingly, I am enclosing a paper which I have prepared, entitled "Can Evangelical Christians Support our Foreign Board?" You will understand that it is not yet released for publication, but is submitted to you for examination and criticism. If there is anything in what I have said that is untrue or unjust, I am of course very anxious to correct it. I shall be extremely grateful for any assistance that you may render to that end.

Very sincerely yours,

(Signed) J. Graham Machen.

CAN EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANS SUPPORT OUR FOREIGN BOARD?

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An Inquiry Presented for the Consideration  
of the Evangelical Members  
of the  
Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.

By

J. Gresham Machen

April 1929

Every agency appealing for funds should be willing to give an account of its stewardship to those to whom it appeals. This principle applies to the Board of Foreign Missions of our Presbyterian Church. The Board is supported not by a tax levied on the members of the Church, but by voluntary contributions. If contributors think that their gifts are being devoted by the Board to the ends for the sake of which they have contributed them, then they will continue their support; otherwise they cannot reasonably be expected to do so.

There are some contributors who need have no hesitation about continuing their support of the Board. Those are the contributors that are interested in the social or material or educational aspects of the Board's work. It is perfectly clear that our Foreign Board is performing a valuable humanitarian service in many parts of the world, and those who want to contribute to such a humanitarian service may probably have confidence in this particular agency. But there are other contributors who may well have grave doubts as to whether they are justified in continuing their gifts. These are the contributors who are interested in propagating the gospel of Jesus Christ as it is contained in the whole Word of God. Can these Bible-loving and Bible-believing Christians conscientiously continue their support of our Foreign Board?

Obviously the question cannot possibly be answered by pronouncements of the General Assembly; for the distrust which evangelical Christians have with respect to the Board itself applies in equal measure to the Assembly. When, indeed, the issue between the Bible and modern belief is clearly presented, the Assembly usually stands on the side of the Bible; (1) repeated pronouncements have affirmed that the full truthfulness of Scripture, the virgin birth, the substitutionary atonement, the bodily resurrection, and the miracles of our Lord, are essential doctrines of our Faith (2). But these pronouncements have been made, practically speaking, a dead letter by the fact that the machinery of the Church is almost altogether in the hands of those who are concealing the real gravity of the situation that exists. Evasive reports as to the state of the Church, like that of the Commission of Fifteen of 1925-1927, will hardly restore the confidence of evangelical Christians; on the contrary, they will in the end do more to destroy confidence than any open presentation of the facts could possibly do. If, therefore, the Foreign Board is to regain the lost confidence of evangelical Christians in the Church, it cannot do so by any appeal to ecclesiastical

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(1) The Assembly stood on the side of the Bible in the "Gantz case" in 1926. In 1927, in the judicial case concerning the licensure of candidates in the Presbytery of New York, it stood against the Bible and in favor of modern unbelief, but only because of the fact that the Moderator, Dr. Speer, quite illegally permitted the representatives of the Synod of New York, who were parties in interest, to vote in the case.

(2) See the pronouncement of the General Assembly of 1910 confirmed by that of 1923 (Minutes, 1923, p. 253).

committees, but can only do so by meeting squarely the objections of individual givers. These individual givers must still raise the question: "Can evangelical Christians conscientiously contribute to our Foreign Board?"

I shall not now attempt to answer that question in any comprehensive way; I shall not attempt any comprehensive examination of the work which the Board is carrying on in foreign lands; but shall merely refer to certain disquieting facts which have come under my immediate observation. These disquieting facts concern, first, the treatment of candidates for the mission field and, second, the pronouncements of Dr. Robert E. Speer.

### I.

With regard to the former subject, my position as professor in Princeton Theological Seminary has given me rather unusual opportunities for observation. I have been thrown into close spiritual contact with a large body of young men who graduate from our seminary from year to year. These young men, of course, differ widely as to the clearness with which they have received into their minds and hearts the gospel of the Cross of Christ; and, in particular, they differ widely in the degree of bravery with which they are resolved to proclaim that gospel in the presence of the unbelief now rampant in the Church. But the large majority of them - indeed a proportion truly amazing in view of the hostile forces now abroad in the world - have resolved to stand firmly for that gospel of the Cross, and firmly against the current indifferentism and unbelief.

Some of these men have cherished as the ambition of their lives the thought of going to the foreign mission field. At last the time approaches for the realization of their high resolve. They meet in conference with representatives of our Board of Foreign Missions. What impression is made by these conferences upon their minds? Are these young men commended for the clearness with which they recognize the insufficiency of all other ways of salvation save the Cross of Christ considered as a substitutionary death for our sins; are they warned against the deadly peril of making common cause with those who preach the "other gospel" of agnostic Modernism; are they encouraged to trust, not in ecclesiastical combinations of human influences, but simply and solely in the Spirit of God making use of the blessed gospel that the Scriptures contain; are they commended for their understanding of the distinctiveness of our Reformed Faith over against various subtractions from the full Scripture doctrine of the grace of God; are they confirmed in their sense of the high liberty of the Presbyterian minister whether at home or abroad? I can certainly, to say the least, find no clear evidence that such is the case. On the contrary, these young men, so far as I can judge by the spiritual effect on them, are given the impression that they are expected to conform to the policy of church cooperation and union which the representatives of the Board favor, and that not separation from the non-Christian world, whether within or without the visible Church, but cooperation with those who differ from us is the crying need of the hour.

My impression with regard to this matter is strengthened by the

official "Candidate Reference Blank" which I have received a number of times from the Board when information is requested regarding prospective missionaries. The reference blank includes among commendable qualities about whose possession by the candidate information is desired, such things as "tolerance of point of view of others", "desire to progress in spiritual truth," "sanity" (explained as "absence of tendency to extreme views"). Clearly a high mark with regard to these qualities is treated as being in the candidate's favor. No doubt there is a sense in which these questions can be answered in the affirmative even in the case of a man who is most clearly determined to be loyal to Christ and to be separate from the unbelieving world. But the trouble is that there are no other questions on this blank to determine whether the candidate is resolved not to tolerate the point of view of those who are opposed to the gospel of Christ as it is set forth in Holy Scripture, and whether he himself is clear in his understanding of the great issue between supernaturalism and naturalism, between evangelical religion and non-doctrinal religion, which now faces the Church. There is, moreover, not one word to determine the candidate's intellectual attainments as over against his intellectual capacity; there is not one word to determine his knowledge of the contents of the gospel. Such a questionnaire, because of the choice of leading questions, creates very plainly the impression that "tolerance of opposing views" is far more valued by the Foreign Board than loyalty to the whole Word of God.

The same impression is also created by the "Application Form" which the candidates themselves are asked to fill out. That form contains the following question "Section I, Question 17":

Does your experience justify the belief that you can cheerfully accept and support the decision of a majority, even if the decision is contrary to your own opinions?

It is difficult to see how any Christian man, certainly how any Protestant, can possibly answer such a question in the affirmative. The Rev. Lindsay S.B. Hadley, indeed, the Candidate Secretary of the Board, in his letter to me of March 8, 1928, distinguishes between "opinions" and "convictions":

This question, as I understand it, has nothing to do with a man's convictions, which naturally we, who are interested in Christian work, would expect a man to hold firmly throughout.

But in making this distinction between opinions and convictions, Mr. Hadley seems to differ sharply from the Form of Government of our Church, where in Chapter I, Section iv, it is said:

And that no opinion can be either more pernicious or more absurd, than that which brings truth and falsehood upon a level, and represents it as of no consequence what a man's opinions are (*italics mine*).

Here the word "opinion" seems clearly to be used in the sense in which Mr. Hadley uses the word "conviction". And surely, in this difference, the Form of Government and not Mr. Hadley is right. The man who does not share a certain view is always inclined to regard that view as an "opinion"; the man who does share it is inclined to regard it as a "conviction". "Opinion" and "conviction", therefore, from the point of view with which we are now concerned, are practically speaking synonymous terms. I still do not see, therefore, how any evangelical Christian, in this day of widespread defection from the faith, can possibly answer in the affirmative the question in the Application Form.

This impression is deepened by an examination of Section IV in the Application Form, which deals with "Religious Experience". That section is declared by the Candidate Secretary in the letter to which reference has already been made, to be "very definite". The secretary writes as follows:

This question (question 17 of Section I) as I understand it, has nothing to do with a man's convictions, which naturally we, who are interested in Christian work, would expect a man to hold firmly throughout. Such statements, however, would come on page 3 under "Religious Experience", which, as you will see are very definite (italics mine).

Let us now turn to those statements which Mr. Hadley declared to be "very definite". The only questions in the section which can by any chance be referred to are questions 5, 6. The last two of these read as follows:

5. Do you believe that in every form of mission work the paramount duty of every missionary is to make Jesus Christ known as Saviour, Lord, and Master?
6. Is it your purpose to make this the chief aim of your missionary career, no matter what special duties may be assigned to you?

Are these the questions which Mr. Hadley regards as "very definite"? Surely the adjective as applied to them is strangely misplaced; for the questions are utterly vague. All the terms used - "Saviour", "Lord" and "Master" - are used today in such widely diverse senses that the questions could be answered in the affirmative by men who from the point of view of the Bible and of evangelical Christians are unbelievers of a very thoroughgoing kind. That the Candidate Secretary of our Foreign Missions should speak of such studiously vague language as being "very definite" raises in very insistent fashion the question whether evangelical Christians can possibly continue to contribute to such a Board.

This question becomes still more insistent when we examine the remaining one of the three questions to which reference has just been made.

That question is question 3. It reads as follows:

3. Have you any views which might prevent your harmonious cooperation with the missionaries of the Presbyterian Church?

This question must surely be taken in connection with question 17 of Section I which has been quoted above. The candidate must have no views that prevent his harmonious cooperation with the missionaries of the Presbyterian Church, and he must be willing to submit his opinion to the majority vote of any group of such missionaries to which he may belong. It is surely a large promise; and we ought to consider carefully what it may involve. What may those "opinions" be which the candidate must, on occasion, be allowed to override his own?

The impression has certainly been made upon some candidates that among the opinions which he is required to allow to over-ride his own are opinions like those which led to the formation of the United Church of Canada; the impression has clearly been made that former service in the Presbyterian Church of Canada (called by its enemies the "Continuing Presbyterian Church") is to be regarded as a ground of suspicion when a candidate comes before the representatives of our Board. Mr. Hadley says that that is not the case; yet in view of his correspondence with me I cannot see how any other impression could possibly have been produced. The whole impression is that the candidate must be ready on occasion to give up the Faith of our Church in accordance with a majority vote, as though he were merely changing a suit of clothes.

At any rate there is one set of "opinions" with which a missionary in these days can hardly avoid contact. It is the kind of opinion represented by the "Auburn Affirmation", which declares in perfectly plain language that the full truthfulness of Scripture, the virgin birth, the substitutionary atonement, the bodily resurrection and the miracles of our Lord are non-essential even for the ministers in our Church. The Affirmation has been signed by about thirteen hundred of our ministers, and unquestionably the point of view that it represents is shared by very large numbers of ministers who did not sign it. What guarantee has the candidate that such opinions are not represented on our mission field, and that it is not to such opinions that he is being asked by question 17 to be willing to submit his own?

But it is not merely such general disquietude that suggests itself in this connection. For it is a fact - a fact which will come as a surprise and shock to many evangelical Christians throughout the Church, but still a fact all the same - that Mr. Hadley, the Candidate Secretary of our Foreign Board, is himself a signer of the Affirmation. This Secretary, who fills this peculiarly important position, who stands in this peculiarly intimate relation to the men who desire to devote themselves to foreign mission work, is a signer of a formal statement that is hostile not only to evangelical Christianity but to all Christianity at its very root.

The cancer of the Auburn Affirmation and what it represents, moreover, cuts far deeper into our Foreign Board than merely by the presence of an



Affirmationist in the position of Candidate Secretary. No less than four among the fifteen ministerial members of the Board are signers of this notable anti-evangelical pronouncement. And what, in this situation, is the attitude of the staff, as distinguished from the governing members, of the Board? Dr. Robert E. Speer, surely, is qualified to give the answer. His answer is given in a letter which he sent to me, jointly with Dr. John A. Marquis of the Board of National Missions, on May 6, 1926:

First - all the members of the Board of the Church were elected by the General Assembly. The Assembly clearly believed that they were loyal and faithful ministers and members of the Church. We know of not one who does not accept the Constitution and Standards of the Church and who is not truly and loyally evangelical.

At the time when that letter was written, no less than six out of fourteen ministerial members of the National Board and five out of fifteen ministerial members of the Foreign Board were signers of the Auburn Affirmation. Yet all these gentlemen are regarded as "truly and loyally evangelical" by Dr. Marquis and Dr. Speer: What possible confidence can really consistent evangelical Christians have in Boards whose standards of what is truly and loyally evangelical are such as this? What kind of mission work is it in which the full truthfulness of Holy Scripture, the virgin birth, the substitutionary atonement, the bodily resurrection and the miracles of our Lord are, all and severally, regarded as non-essential? Certainly it is a kind of mission work which no consistent evangelical Christian can support.

Is it such questions with regard to which candidates for the mission field are required to show "tolerance of the point of view of others"? The whole tendency, the whole attitude of the Candidate Department strongly creates such an impression. The question is not whether ~~men~~<sup>who</sup> are lukewarm in their testimony against Modernism will be sent to the foreign field, but whether men who are faithful in their testimony, will be sent. One thing at least is clear: No real evangelical Christian, certainly no intelligent one, can possibly, without disloyalty to his Saviour and Lord, contribute to any mission work that is favorable to the point of view represented by the Auburn Affirmation. The Affirmation is hostile to repeated pronouncements of the General Assembly. But that is not the serious objection to it. The really serious objection to it is that it is hostile to the Word of God.

## II.

A second cause of disquiet regarding the Foreign Board is found in the utterances of Dr. Robert E. Speer.

Among those utterances, one deserves special attention. It is the booklet, "Are Foreign Missions Done For?" which Dr. Speer has recently dis-

tributed widely in the Church. "This little book", says the preface, "is an attempt to meet fairly and honestly some of the present day questions which are raised with regard to the foreign missionary enterprise." The booklet has been widely distributed, and evidently it is intended by its author to be an apologia for the work of our Foreign Board. Here then, if anywhere, the evangelical Christian might fairly expect to obtain some sort of answer to the questions which he has felt obliged to raise.

Are such expectations satisfied? We are obliged to say very plainly that they are not. Far from setting forth any clearly evangelical position on the great specific questions that agitate the Church, Dr. Speer's book from beginning to end is dishearteningly evasive and vague.

This vagueness appears in most distressing form just when the author seems to suppose that what he says is particularly clear. No less than twice in the course of the book Dr. Speer quotes an utterance made by a conference held at Princeton in 1920 (1). That utterance, he says has "nothing uncertain or confused" about it; "it is definite and comprehensive" (p. 56). The evangelical reader will naturally turn with high hopes to an utterance for which such claims are advanced. Surely, he will say, the utterance must set forth in no uncertain terms the authority of the written Word as over against the current mysticism that turns rather to Christian experience or Christ in the soul; surely it must declare the absolute necessity, for every missionary, of belief in the virgin birth of our Lord, in His bodily resurrection, in His substitutionary death as a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice, in His supernatural return, in the absolute necessity of the new birth as over against any development of human goodness, in justification by faith alone, in salvation by the sovereign grace of God.

Are such hopes realized? What is this evangelical utterance which Dr. Speer declares to be so comprehensive and so plain? The evangelical Christian may have difficulty in believing his eyes when he finds that the following is all that it is:

"The supreme and controlling aim of foreign missions is to make the Lord Jesus Christ known to all men as their Divine Saviour and to persuade them to become His disciples; to gather these disciples into Christian churches which shall be self-propagating, self-supporting, and self-governing; to cooperate, so long as necessary, with these churches in the evangelizing of their countrymen and in bringing to bear on all human life the spirit and principles of Christ."

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(1) Pp. 56, 81. In one other place, also, a practically identical declaration is quoted. (p. 84).

Such is the utterance which is declared to be so definite and so clear! No doubt it will seem clear to the agnostic Modernism that is rampant in our Church; for it is couched in just the vague, ambiguous language that Modernism loves. All the terms - "Lord", "Divine Saviour", "disciples", and, alas, "Jesus Christ" - are used today in senses entirely alien to the Word of God; and the utterance ignores altogether the grand particularities of the Christian faith. The utterance speaks of "the spirit and principles of Christ"; but "spirit" is spelled with a small letter and the Third Person of the blessed Trinity is ignored; the utterance speaks of Jesus as Saviour, but there is nothing about the sin from which He saves or the Cross by which salvation was wrought; the utterance speaks of bringing to bear upon human life "the spirit and principles of Christ", but there is nothing about the necessity of the mysterious, regenerating work of God's Spirit, without which "the spirit and principles of Christ" (whatever they may be) are quite powerless to save men from wrath to come. In short, there is no hint here that the foreign missionary has a message to mankind lost in sin, that that message is contained solely in the Bible as the word of God, and that the heart and core of the message is found in redemption by the precious blood of Christ. Yet Dr. Speer says (p.81): "No better answer can be given to those who wish to know what our foreign missionaries conceive that they are about and how they are setting about it than to quote the more important of the Findings of this Conference".<sup>(1)</sup> We can only say that if this be the answer which our Foreign Board has to give regarding the content of the Christian message, then it is difficult to see how evangelical Christians can continue their support of the Board. So far as this declaration indicates, the Board may be propagating the vague "other gospel" of non-doctrinal Modernism just as probably as the blessed gospel that the Bible contains.

The vagueness that characterizes this utterance also characterizes the whole booklet of Dr. Speer. There is in it no mention of the virgin birth of our Lord and of the absolute necessity of belief in it for every missionary, no mention of the bodily resurrection, no mention of the full truthfulness of Scripture (indeed no mention of Scripture, as such, at all), no mention of the supernatural return of Christ, no mention of the new birth of believers, no mention of justification by faith, no mention of the atoning death of Christ.<sup>(2)</sup> What sort of gospel is it from which all that makes a gospel has thus been left out? In this vague message the offense of the Cross is done away, but so is the glory and the power.

Some of the testimonies to which he appeals seem to us, indeed, very unconvincing. There are the testimonies of non-Christian men in mission countries - testimonies to the "moral and spiritual values" of Christianity, to the loftiness of Jesus' teaching and example, to the transforming power of his "principles." Sadness comes over us as we read Dr. Speer's rehearsal of such testimonies. Would they ever have been rendered if missionaries had been faithful in preaching the real Christ? The plain fact is that the real Christ advanced stupendous claims. Unless those claims are true, He is not a perfect

(1) Then follows (pp.81-85) the paragraph quoted above and a fuller transcript of the findings of the Conference, which, however, does not really go beyond this paragraph so far as questions of principles are concerned.

(2) There is one bare mention of "the Crucified and ever Living Lord". (p.37).

ideal at all. He uttered a "hard saying"; and many of His former followers went back and walked no more with Him. Has that hard saying been kept in the background today, that Jesus might win this superficial and patronizing favor among those who have not been born again? Could that favor ever have been won if missionaries had put Calvary in its proper place, if they had been willing to bear the offense of the Cross? Such questions do arise in our minds when we read Dr. Speer's enthusiastic words about the permeation of the nations with Christian principles and the Christian "spirit".

We do not, indeed, undervalue a good testimony to Christian living by those who are without. How often in recent years has such testimony been wrung from unwilling lips by those who amid the fires of persecution have been true to Jesus Christ? Still, the message of the Cross, when it is faithfully presented, is a very offensive thing. It is to the Jews a stumbling block, to the Greeks foolishness. When the offense of it is avoided, we are inclined to doubt the faithfulness of the preaching. God grant that the Church, both at home and abroad, may never be ashamed of the offense of the Cross!

But if we differ from Dr. Speer in the arguments by which we defend foreign missions, we agree with him with all our souls in the conclusion. We agree with him in holding that foreign missions are the only hope of the world. Indeed far more poignant is our sense of the need of foreign missions than is his. For we do not share his favorable view of human nature (1); the primary fact, we hold, is that mankind everywhere is lost in sin. We cannot keep that fact in the background as Dr. Speer does. It and it alone constitutes the really profound need of the world. How great then is the obligation to preach the one message that will save lost sinners and bring them into peace with God!

But where is that message to be found? Where are missionaries to find the message that they shall proclaim throughout the world? That is surely a basic question. Yet no clear answer to it can be found in Dr. Speer's book -- certainly not the true answer. Dr. Speer speaks of "the search for the infinite riches of God in Christ" (p.37), "a quest for an ever enlarging understanding of the fulness of Christ" (ibid.); but nowhere does he speak of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as being the true source of the missionary message. He hopes for "some exposure of treasures in Christ or in the New Testament or in the Holy Spirit which have been hidden as yet". (p.46) We cannot help feeling that the Bible is here removed from the unique place in which it is put -- and rightly put -- in the standards of our Church. New exposures of truth, Dr. Speer says, are to be expected from Christ or from the New Testament or from the Holy Spirit. What boundless confusion is

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(1) "What is needed", Dr. Speer says, (p.41), "is that everywhere in all lands men should be set free from what is evil and bad and that human good should be built by God's help through Christ and His Gospel." What a difference there is between this teaching and Jesus' words to Nicodemus: "Ye must be born again". Compare the beginning of Dr. Speer's book, "The Unfinished Task of Foreign Missions (1926), where, on pp. 10f., the use of human goodness - illustrated by Jerome K. Jerome's "Passing of the Third Floor Back" - is represented as being the method of Jesus!

is here, what woeful lack of clearness as to the very foundation of all missionary work: (1)

What is the missionary to say when he begins work on his field? Is he to appeal to a Christ in his own soul, is he to draw from his own experience for the content of his message, is he to place the treasures which he finds in the New Testament alongside of other treasures which he finds in Christ or in the Holy Spirit? If he does so, he has deserted the basis upon which all the teaching of our Church rests -- namely, the authority of the blessed written Word of God.

Very different should be the attitude of the true missionary of the Cross. His function is a humbler function, and yet a function which in its humility may prove to be the most glorious function of all. His function is not to draw upon mystical experience of his own for the content of his message, but simply to set forth what is taught in God's word -- both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament, both in the words of Jesus in the Gospels and in the words of the Holy Spirit in the Epistles of Paul. The function of the true missionary is simply to open the pages of the Holy Book and say: "Thus saith the Lord."

He cannot, indeed, do that with any power unless he has received the message in his own heart, unless he knows in his own soul the living Saviour whom the Scriptures present. The Holy Spirit must illumine for him the sacred page. But the content of his message will be based upon the Bible and upon the Bible alone.

When the message is based upon the Bible alone, the content of the message will be very different from that which now is heard. Gone will be all vagueness like the vagueness of Dr. Speer's little book. Instead, there will stand out the great verities which the Church is commissioned to set forth -- the awful holiness of God, the deadly guilt and power of sin, the true deity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, His virgin birth, His mighty miracles, His obedience to the Law, His righteousness with which believers are clothed, His sacrifice to satisfy divine justice and reconcile us to God, His glorious resurrection in the body in which he suffered, His ascension into Heaven, the sending of the Holy Spirit, the utter powerlessness of man, the sovereign grace of God by which alone are made alive those who were dead in trespasses and sins, the new and right relation to God received only by those in whom the Holy Spirit has wrought faith, the new walk and conversation of those who have been received by God and made alive from the dead, the dread yet glorious hope of Christ's supernatural appearing in glory when He shall come to judge

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(1) Compare Dr. Speer's book "The New Opportunity of the Church", 1919, p. 44: "Deeper and more religious meanings than we have ever proclaimed are discerned in the Cross of Christ, revealed and illustrated in the war." Does Dr. Speer mean that these new "meanings" are deeper and more religious than those that are set forth in the fifth chapter of II Corinthians or in the eighth chapter of Romans? And have these Scriptural "meanings" never been proclaimed from New Testament times until the World War? Ah, how far are we here from the majestic simplicity of the gospel of the Cross!

#11.

the world.

A new and glorious day will it be for the distracted Church when that message again shall ring out clear, when there shall be a return from the imaginations of men's hearts to God's Holy Word. Meanwhile there are those who already love and honor that Word. What shall they do in the present day? Can they continue to support a mission agency that has wandered so far? There are many men and women in our Church who are raising that question. And they will raise it yet more earnestly if they read Dr. Speer's little book with care.

#### CONCLUSION

What, then, <sup>should</sup> evangelical Christians now do? Can they conscientiously continue their contributions to such a Board?

The question might seem to have been answered by what has already been said. But the answer is not really quite so simple as it seems. We ought never to forget that despite the attitude of the Board there are many faithful missionaries under the Board who are proclaiming the full gospel as it is set forth in the whole Word of God. Those faithful missionaries of the Cross should not be allowed to suffer because of the faults of the administrative agency under which they stand. Until some truly evangelical agency is formed to care for those faithful missionaries, evangelical people cannot withhold their support of the present Board.

But has the time not come for the establishment of a truly evangelical missionary agency in the Presbyterian Church -- an agency to which evangelical Christians can contribute, not with hesitation and distrust, but with all confidence and joy, an agency which shall keep clear of entangling alliances and shall proclaim the full glories of the Reformed Faith as they are found in the Word of God? The question may well be raised; it may well be commended to the prayerful consideration of that large body of Christian laymen in our Church who love their Bibles and the crucified Saviour set forth therein, who know that the "principles of Jesus" will never save the world -- nor what Dr. Speer calls his "redeeming life" (1) -- but only His precious redeeming blood, who are not seeking the patronizing testimony of non-Christian men, which Dr. Speer rehearses at such length, but who are willing to bear the offense of the Cross.

If such an evangelical agency is formed, its virtue must be not merely negative but positive; it must not only avoid denying the gospel, but it must preach the gospel in all its fullness and in all its power. One fundamental vice underlies the defense of the present Board; its representatives seem to think that the burden of proof is to be placed upon those who deny that the Board is sounding an evangelical note. "Be definite in your charges", they say in effect; "point out individual missionaries against whom charges of

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(1) The relation of the Foreign Missionary Enterprise to the World Situation of Today," in Christian Students and World Problems, 1924, p. 139.

heresy can be preferred, or else keep silent with your criticism and continue your support." What is the trouble with such a line of defense? Is it not that the defense is negative merely? The assumption seems to be that if the missionaries or the secretaries of the Board cannot be proved to be saying that which is contrary to the gospel of Christ, then all is well. But cannot these gentlemen really understand any better than that the point of view of evangelical Christians in our Church? Cannot they understand that what evangelical Christians demand is not an agency that avoids denying the gospel of the Cross of Christ, that perhaps pays perfunctory lip service to it on explicit demand, but an agency that is on fire with that gospel, that never for one moment keeps it in the background, that preaches it in season and out of season, that combats what is contradictory to it, that presents it as the only way of salvation for lost and dying men? If in answer to the present paper Dr. Speer should affirm his belief in the atonement of Christ -- that heart of the gospel which, so far as we have been able to observe, he has in his recent books dealt with only to bring it into connection with the death of soldiers in the war, or otherwise to explain it away -- if he should affirm his belief in the virgin birth of Christ, and in the other four basic elements of our faith to which the Auburn affirmationists have done despite, if even he should affirm his conviction of the necessity of these beliefs, still our objections would not really be removed. What we long for is not a missionary agency that affirms belief in the essential things of the faith when asked to do so, but a missionary agency that proclaims those things joyously, spontaneously, and all the time. The difference here concerns the question where the really central emphasis is to be placed. It is not merely a difference of the mind, but a difference of the heart. What is the real impact of our Foreign Board upon the world? Is it the preaching of Christ crucified -- not in some pale modern sense, not as a thing upon which new light is shed by the death of soldiers in the war, but as a blessed mystery revealed in the Word of God? If it is, then we can support that Board? But if not, we must seek some other agency that will proclaim this thing which to us is the breath of life. Christ has bought us with His own precious blood. Woe be to us if we proclaim, either by our words or by our gifts, some other gospel than the gospel of the Cross. And may God show us now we can best proclaim that gospel through the length and breadth of the world!

COPY

PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

J. Gresham Machen  
P.O. Address - Box 4, Princeton, N.J.

May 4, 1929.

Dr. Robert E. Speer  
The Board of Foreign Missions  
Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.,  
156 Fifth Avenue  
New York, N.Y.

My dear Dr. Speer:

Please let me thank you for your letter of April 30th, which has come into my hands today. I am exceedingly grateful for the careful way in which you have commented upon my paper, - CAN EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANS SUPPORT OUR FOREIGN BOARD?

I wish that I could say that your letter had removed my objections to the policy of the Board of Foreign Missions, but in point of fact it has tended rather to the confirmation of those objections. My reply in detail will have to be deferred until I can give the considerations adduced in the letter the detailed examination which they certainly deserve. Meanwhile I am deferring publication of my paper.

The appeal for peace in the Church and between us, with which your letter closes, seems rather strange at a time when you are actively engaged in the attack upon the conservative control of Princeton Seminary and in the effort to substitute the policy favored by the President for the policy which the institution is bound by the most solemn trust obligations to maintain. The policy of tolerance hardly seems to work both ways. The conservatives are not only to tolerate in the Church but also to give active support to the message that you proclaim; while you, on the other hand, are engaged in destroying almost the last remaining powerful agency which the conservatives possess for the propagation of their Faith in the Presbyterian Church.

Very sincerely yours,

(Signed) J. Gresham Machen.



April 30, 1923

Professor J. Gresham Machen, D.D.,  
Box A., Princeton,  
New Jersey.

My dear Dr. Machen,

I have already acknowledged the receipt of your letter of April 12, 1923, with your accompanying paper entitled "Can Evangelical Christians Support our Foreign Board?" which you asked me to examine and criticize in order that if it contained anything "untrue or unjust" you might correct it. You courteously added that you would be grateful for any assistance that I might render to this end. I am very glad to respond and to try to help you to an affirmative answer to the question of your paper. I believe that you and Christian missionaries are not less evangelical than yours, and I believe that our foreign missionary work and workers are also truly evangelical. If I were not convinced of both of these things I should not be associated with our Foreign Board or with the Presbyterian Church. And I use the word evangelical, as will appear, in its plain and honest sense of fidelity to the full Scriptural warrant and content of the Gospel.

I will try first to indicate particular points in your paper which appear to me to be "untrue or unjust" and then I will speak of the paper as a whole.

1. Your contrast and implied antagonism between the "humanitarian service" of the Board and "propagating the Gospel of Jesus Christ as it is contained in the whole Word of God" appears to me to be unjust and untrue and un-Scriptural. It is of course possible to divide the first from the second but not the second from the first. The Gospel includes human service. The New Testament is full of that principle. It insists on such service as one of the evidences and fruits of fidelity to the Gospel. Furthermore, it is by the expression of the Gospel in deeds as well as in words that the Gospel was preached and is ever to be preached. Indeed, in many languages there were no words which had the significance of the English or Greek words embodying the truths of the Gospel and in these languages old words had to be taken and given a new content by life, as the Incarnation and its interpretation did at the beginning. It is true that our Board is carrying on a great body of human service and any one who is desirous of doing such work can not find any better opportunity for it than here, but our Board has always made it perfectly clear that in our policy all philanthropic work is tributary to and associated with the primary aim of evangelization. I have expressed my own convictions on this point again and again. One quotation from "Missionary Principles and Practice" (1906) will suffice: "In all use of philanthropic effort, such as medical missions, relief work, etc., as a method of mission work, the dominant and determining aim must

be evangelistic. Such work is useful as securing friendship, saving lives, representing the helpful, unselfish spirit of Christianity, contributing to the preaching of Christ, and the revelation of Him as Saviour and Lord, the source of all life and hope, and as relieving suffering; but it is not the responsibility of the foreign missionary enterprise to care for the sick and suffering of the world. Times of critical need may occur, as in great epidemics and pestilence, when a broad liberty of action must be recognized; but in general, the aim of our philanthropic work should be to contribute directly to the preaching of the Gospel, the establishment of the Christian Church, and to the fostering of that Christian spirit which will provide, through the native Church which is growing up and through the people themselves, the salutary fruits of Christianity in philanthropic and humanitarian effort. As a missionary method, philanthropic work should primarily be limited, therefore, by the possibility of its evangelistic utilization and influence. A small development of such work contributing powerfully in the direction indicated is better than a large development of but feeble or indirect evangelistic influence." I think it is an error in your paper and in all your books that you do not adequately recognize and set forth the full doctrine of the Scriptures, namely, that the Gospel is to be preached not by word only but also and not less or less fundamentally by deeds of love and mercy. And thus preached by word and deed by our Presbyterian Church's Missions true fruitage has followed. Converts have been won and churches have been established in numerous and of a true New Testament character as have resulted from the work of any other mission. You are invited to make any comparison you please, including the administrative Missions which you have sometimes praised for that you regard as their superior doctrinal fidelity.

2. It is not for me to presume to offend the General Assembly and the Church at large against your expressions of distrust or your contention that the Church and the Assembly are not really evangelical. I believe that our Church is evangelical. I wish with you that it were better instructed in the doctrine and more animated by the Spirit of the Gospel, but I believe that it is doctrinally and really a truly evangelical Church and I believe, too, that the Foreign Board has not lost its confidence. There are, of course, individuals, like yourself, who feel and express distrust, but I believe you and they are mistaken in this and that the Church is warily and evangelically loyal both to the Gospel and to the Board and the cause which it represents.

Perhaps I should say a word regarding the protest referring to the General Assembly in 1907 when, against my reluctance and protest, I was made Moderator. As to my action in connection with Judicial Case No. 1, I errand in unwittingly failing to note and to prevent the voting of members of New York Synod on either side of the question, to the extent to which any of them did vote. There were not, however, the only votes illegally cast. And there were other and graver errors antecedent to those for which I am not responsible and which I could not prevent. For the good and honor of the Church it is better to pass them over, but if this matter is to be brought forward the whole story should be unflinchingly told. I candidly summarized the situation at the meeting of the Assembly the following year, and the Assembly unanimously sustained my position.

I note your appreciation of the worth of any endorsement of the Foreign Board by the General Assembly but perhaps you would think more kindly of the resolutions of the Assembly at Grand Rapids in 1884 (Sept. 1) of Expressing the appreciation of the Standing Committee on Foreign Missions, of which Dr. Mac I<sup>1</sup>

Chairman and Dr. Robert Dick Wilson was a member, with regard to union and cooperative enterprises, the selection of missionary candidates, the use of schools and hospitals, and the proclamation of the Gospel which, however, the Committee did not feel bound to describe and define. These were four of the resolutions:

"That while maintaining loyally the policy established by past General Assemblies in repeated enactments with regard to cooperation with other Evangelical bodies in our Foreign Missionary Work the Board be directed to exercise due care with regard to the Evangelical character of all such union and cooperative enterprises, and if there should arise in the work of these enterprises a situation in which teachings unsound or injurious to the Evangelical Faith are given, the Board, as it has declared to be its policy, should either secure the correction of such a situation or failing such withdraw from further participation.

"That the Board be commended for its care in the selection and appointment of Candidates for the Foreign Field, and that they be requested to continue to exercise the most scrupulous care in this regard.

"That we rejoice in all the courage in which in home and Church, in hospital and school, by word and by the printed page, Christ has been preached to men, and we assure the Missionaries and native Churches of our hope and prayer that the program of simple and direct Evangelism may be so increased that the Gospel may be carried to all the people for whose evangelization we are responsible.

"That in this hour when the world's need of Christ is so manifest and desperate, when the opportunities are so great, and new doors of entrance are opened into lands like Afghanistan, which have been hitherto closed, when young men and women are offering themselves freely for service, when our Missionaries and Churches with which they are waiting are eager for a great advance, when the problems of mankind of nations and of races cry out, consciously or unconsciously, for Christ as their only solution, when the experience of the past year has revealed anew to the Church the adequate resources which are available to Faith and love through the grace of God, this Assembly here and now dedicates itself and calls upon the Church to consecrate herself afresh to a new obedience to the last command of our glorified Lord and to a full acceptance of His Leadership in the supreme task of making the Gospel known to all mankind and of establishing His Kingdom over all the earth."

3. You describe the impression which you say is made upon the minds of Princeton Seminary students by their conferences with representatives of our Foreign Board. The two representatives of our Board with whom the students have most contact are members of the faculty of Princeton Seminary and the full evangelical loyalty of their personal convictions has, I think, not been questioned. It has on the other hand been vouched for repeatedly by the Board of Directors and is trusted throughout the Church. As to the Candidate Department of the Board the best evidence of its attitude is in its acts. It has not recommended the declination or discouragement of a single Princeton Seminary student because of doctrinal convictions. The only specific case which you cite, of the young man recently who had been working in the Continuing Presbyterian Church in Canada, met with no discouragement whatever. He was a most desirable candidate, and was at once and joyfully appointed.

The men wanted for foreign missions are men who firmly believe and who know

and have experienced the Gospel of the New Testament, and who are able and ready to go out to preach by word and life "the glorious Gospel of the blessed God" in the fulness of its New Testament meaning. So far from discouraging such men, the Board is eagerly seeking for them. And when they are found they are counselled to stand fast in the Scriptural faith and to go forth to proclaim the message of the Gospel in all their life and work and teaching. You say there is no clear evidence of this. On the other hand I think there is clear evidence in the instructions given in the annual conference with new missionaries and otherwise. For a single example I refer you to Dr. George Alexander's sermon at the Post War Conference of the Board and all the Missions, entitled, "The Gospel of Paul."

4. You say that your impression of misgiving and distrust is strengthened by the blank which is sent to those whose names the candidate for missionary appointment gives as references, and you single out for criticism from the fifth items of character and equipment which are mentioned these three - "tolerance of the point of view of others," "desire to progress in spiritual truth" and "sanity", explained as "absence of tendency to extreme views." Surely you cannot mean to imply that these are undesirable qualities in Christian missionaries. There are, to be sure, limits to toleration, just as to some other virtues, and it is not always easy to fix those limits. In your book on "The Origin of Paul's Religion" you carry as a scholar with great urbanity, the limits of tolerance of the point of view of others far beyond the point where any one would dream of carrying them in cooperation in missionary service, but there would be nothing but pure separate individualism, as you have recognized in your books, if we were not prepared to work together within the evangelical fellowship in tolerance of the point of view of others. The question of the blank, as Dr. Haffley pointed out to you, covers simply that. And this Charles Hodder defended and advocated at the meeting of the Evangelical Alliance in New York in 1873 and Dr. Patton has nobly set forth in "Fundamental Christianity" and Dr. E. D. Warfield has emphasized in his minority Report to the General Assembly of 1928 when, referring to our troubles at Princeton Seminary, he says, "In my judgment the root and ground of the difficulties are embodied in personalities, and so far as they are not embodied in personalities, they are embodied in the lack of that tolerance which we so strongly claim for ourselves and so generally deny to others." The question on the reference blank involves no more and nothing different from this - the ability of Christian men who hold the evangelical convictions of our Church to work together in harmony and good will and mutual tolerance.

And as to "desire to progress in spiritual truth" - that is one of the clearest admonitions of the New Testament: "Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." "Long for the spiritual milk which is without guile that ye may grow thereby unto salvation." "To walk worthily of the Lord unto all pleasing, bearing fruit in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God." And how many more passages! It is men and women who long and strive for the fulfilment of these possibilities in their own lives who are wanted in Christian service at home and abroad.

And "sanity", meaning "absence of tendency to extreme views." Certainly the opposite of these qualities is not desirable. How carefully in your books do you guard against certain extreme views rampant in the millennial hope, regarding mysticism, regarding extreme intellectualism and extreme experimentalism, and many others! And how earnestly Paul counsels men: "Let your moderation, your forbearance be known unto all men." "God gave us a spirit of power and love and of a sound mind." "Soberness" is one of his emphasized virtues and Peter's, too. "Be ye therefore sober and watch unto prayer." "Therefore gird up the loins"

of your mind, be sober and set your hope perfectly on the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." This is true sanity, the sanity desired in missionaries. (CP. Gal. V. 25, II Peter I. 5)

And note the place of these questions and their relationship to other questions in the blank. "Tolerance of the point of view of others" is part of the eighth general subject. "Teamwork qualities." Four are mentioned, as follows: "a. Tact. b. Tolerance of the point of view of others. c. Self-control. d. Flexibility. (Subordination when best of one's own ambitions and preferences.)" The tenth subject of inquiry is "Spiritual qualities" and the subheads are: "a. Christian character. b. Vital religious experience. c. Spiritual influence on others." The eleventh subject is "Promises of Development in the Christian life" and the subheads are: "a. Desire to progress in spiritual truth. b. Eagerness for Christian service. c. Sanity. (Absence of tendency to extreme views)." Then follow questions as to the experience of the candidate in various forms of practical work and Christian service.

To twist these simple and reasonable and wise questions and to freight them with suspicion is an untrue and unjust note in your paper.

5. You say that in the "Candidate Reference Blank" "there is not one word to determine the candidate's intellectual attainments as over against his intellectual capacity; there is not one word to determine his knowledge of the contents of the Gospel." That is covered (1) by the constitutional requirements of the Church with regard to the examinations of ordained candidates by their Presbyteries which are reported to the Board. (Frequent actions of the General Assembly have dealt with this matter on the functions of Mission Boards and Presbyteries in this regard. The question as respects the Foreign Board was passed upon by the Board and by the General Assembly in 1902 and 1905 when Dr. W. A. Paxton and Dr. Robert Russell Booth and Dr. John Fox, who were then members of the Board, were particularly concerned in the decisions reached, and in 1895, 1919 and 1921. (2) By the three questions to which most space is given and which are deemed the most important questions on the "Candidate Reference Blank", namely, "Would you recommend appointment?" "If not, what would seem to be the weak points or faults which in your judgment should disqualify the applicant from foreign mission work?" "Unhindered by any question, please state frankly your own opinion as to the general fitness of the candidate for the work of a foreign missionary?" (3) By the inclusion in the Personal Application Blank filled out by every layman and woman candidate of the four Constitutional questions propounded by Presbyteries to candidates for ordination. (4) By the following questions: "What is your habit in devotional Bible study and prayer?" "Do you believe that in every form of mission work the paramount duty of every missionary is to make Jesus Christ known as Saviour, Lord and Master?" "Is it your purpose to make this the chief aim of your missionary service, no matter what special duties may be assigned to you?"

(5) By requiring from every candidate, ordained and unordained, a separate letter. The requirement is thus expressed on all application blanks:

"WRITE A SEPARATE LETTER giving in brief: (a) A sketch of your life; (b) Your Christian development and experience; (c) Your motives in seeking missionary appointment; (d) The content of your Christian Message."

As explaining what is involved the following statement is sent to every candidate

who is not under care and examination of a Presbytery:

"The Content of your Christian Message."

This question is vital. You propose to go to a foreign land in order to propagate the Christian religion, either by public address, or by personal contacts, or by both. It is of utmost importance that you should have a clear idea of what this religion is. Any positive statements upon Christian faith and practice which you wish to make should be set forth here, and will naturally include your idea of God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, the redemptive work of Christianity, duties to your fellow men, the Bible, the Church, together with such other leading truths as you would expect to embody in your message. Such condensation is desired as may be consistent with a satisfactory setting forth of your views."

Possibly you may never have seen this last statement. It has been in use for the past six years.

In the light of these statements I think your criticism of the blanks is untrue and unjust.

6. You criticize also the question on the application blank with regard to the ability of the candidate to "Cheerfully accept and support the decision of a majority, even if the decision is contrary to your (his) own opinions," and you are dissatisfied with Mr. Hadley's explanation that this does not refer to theological convictions but to capacity to work with others happily in attending to our main common business and in pursuing our definite and united aim even though there may be differences of opinion over questions of method and policy and judgment, and other things too. Such ability to work with others is certainly important. In the Shantung Mission in China there were three strong personalities - Dr. Fevius, Dr. Matser and Dr. Corbett. These men were wide apart in their opinions as to missionary policy and method, but they were able to adjust themselves and to establish and carry forward one of the best missions of our Church. Mr. Hadley was right in interpreting this question in this sense, and raising not the issue of evangelical theological views, which are the expected basis of missionary appointment, but "the question of temperament and ability to work in fullest harmony with people in the small group which is usually found in a mission station."

The question on the application blank is an old, old question. It has been used for many years; in its present form for the past seven years. It has never had any reference to theological views. They are covered, as I have pointed out, in other ways.

7. You criticize also the two questions which emphasize the "paramount duty" and "the chief aim" of each missionary "to make Jesus Christ known as Saviour, Lord and Master." Surely this is just what the Church wants to be sure of in its foreign missionaries, that every one of them will set the spiritual, evangelistic purpose in the first place and, as the Board's Manual says, will make "all methods and forms of missionary service contribute to the realization of this aim." I shall refer later to your rejection of this statement of the missionary aim but I would refer here, though I shall refer again also to this, to your statement that the use in these questions of the terms "Saviour", "Lord" and "Master" is "studiously vague." That statement is both untrue and unjust. It is the kind of statement regarding your Christian brethren which both the Scriptures and the Standards of our Church forbid. I use the term "Saviour" and "Lord" and "Master", and my associates use them

and they are used by the Board in these questions, in the same sense, in the full sense, in the sincere and explicit sense in which they are used in the Gospels, in the Book of Acts, in the Epistles and in the Revelation - in that sense and in no other. If you think that they are not adequate or that they are "studiedly vague" your controversy is with the New Testament whose meaning and authority in this and in all things I unreservedly accept and with whose very words I am content.

8. You refer to the fact that on May 8, 1928, "no less than six out of fourteen ministerial members of the National Board and five out of fifteen ministerial members of the Foreign Board" were signers of the "Auburn Affirmation" and that four of the five in the case of the Foreign Board are still members of the Board and that Mr. Hadley, the present Candidate Secretary of the Board, was also a signer, though at the time he signed he had not become a secretary of the Board. If I were a minister I would not have signed the "Auburn Affirmation." Nor would I sign any other except the great affirmation of our Confession: "The Supreme Judge can be no other but the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture."

I have, however, just re-read the "Affirmation" and note the following positive declarations:

"We affirm and declare our acceptance of the Westminster Confession of Faith, as we did at our ordinations, 'as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures.' We sincerely hold and earnestly preach the doctrines of evangelical Christianity, in agreement with the historic testimony of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, of which we are loyal ministers. \*\*\*"

"We all hold most earnestly to these great facts and doctrines (i.e., the inspiration of the Bible, and the Incarnation, the Atonement, the Resurrection, and the Continuing Life and Supernatural Power of our Lord Jesus Christ); we all believe from our hearts that the writers of the Bible were inspired of God; that Jesus Christ was God manifest in the flesh; that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, and through Him we have our redemption; that having died for our sins He rose from the dead and is our everlasting Saviour; that in His earthly ministry He wrought many mighty works, and by His vicarious death and unflinching presence He is able to save to the uttermost."

In their positive affirmation surely these men are as much entitled to be trusted and believed as you and I think we are, and if I understand at all the positions and principles of Dr. Charles Hodge and Dr. Patton there is basis here for righteous Christian cooperation.

9. The second part of your paper is devoted to my "utterances" as a "cause of disquiet regarding the Foreign Board." And the terms of your letter and the expressed suspicions and implied charges of your statement are a summons to self-defense. I have been associated with the foreign mission work of our Church in our Board for thirty-eight years. I have tried to serve faithfully and efficiently and I do not think the service needs to be vindicated to men. There is a Master whom you and I are both trying to serve and His judgment is the only judgment which need much concern us, and you and I are both clearly known to Him. But one is glad of the opportunity to bear his Christian witness to our glorious Lord and His Gospel and to seek to relieve the foreign mission cause, to which long ago I gave my whole life from the suspicions and distrust which you think my utterances have brought upon it.

The chief ground of complaint and criticism in your statement with regard to me relates to the little book "Are Foreign Missions Done For?" and its statement of the aims of foreign missions. Inasmuch as this statement of aims is quoted in the book from the Board's Manual, where it has stood in its present form for many years, I am glad to retire for a time with the little book into the background and shall take up your attack on the statement of the missionary aim to which also reference was earlier made. The statement which you criticize is as follows:

"The supreme and controlling aim of foreign missions is to make the Lord Jesus Christ known to all men as their Divine Saviour and to persuade them to become His disciples; to gather these disciples into Christian churches which shall be self-propagating, self-supporting, and self-governing; to cooperate, so long as necessary, with these churches in the evangelization of their countrymen and in bringing to bear on all human life the spirit and principles of Christ."

You object to this as "evasive and vague" and because it does not explicitly "declare the absolute necessity for every missionary of belief in the virgin birth of our Lord, in His bodily resurrection, in His substitutionary death as a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice, in His supernatural return, in the absolute necessity of the new birth as over and above any development of human goodness, in justification by faith alone, in salvation by the sovereign grace of God."

In reply I would say: (1) This statement of the supreme and controlling aim of foreign missions was prepared in its present form by a committee of the Post War Conference of the Board with representatives of the Missions held at Princeton in June 1920. The Chairman of this Committee was the Rev. J. Walter Lowrie, D.D., of China, ~~the~~ secretary of the Bible Union of China. It was he who helped to form this statement, which the Conference unanimously adopted for just what it was intended to be, no more and no less. It was not a statement of the doctrinal content of the Gospel message. It was the briefest possible declaration of the central purpose of missions with due subordination of its various elements. That central purpose most assuredly is to make known our Lord Jesus Christ the Saviour of the World. (2) The statement is absolutely and faithfully Scriptural. It gathers together the words and thoughts of the Great Commission in its various forms: "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." "And He said unto them, Go ye to all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." "And ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

All your criticisms of the aims as stated are equally applicable, more so, to the last commands of our Lord. These commands do not mention the things you require to have mentioned. They do contain certain ideas which you disapprove. Your views explain why you even attack the clear meaning and the very words of the Great Commission as setting records at naught.

(3) You summarize your criticisms of the statement of aim by saying "In short, there is no hint here that the foreign missionary has a message to mankind lost in sin, that that message is contained fully in the Bible as the word of God, and that the heart and core of the message is found in redemption by the



precious blood of Christ " I think that any fair and candid Christian mind will find not only a hint of these things but far more than a hint in the plain, honest words of the aim of honorably and fairly minded men. These and other elements of the Gospel would be included in a statement of the content of the message which the missionary is to make known, but they do not naturally or essentially fall in a sentence-statement of the central and controlling aim. That aim is to make our Saviour and Lord, Jesus Christ, the Son of God known to the world. Paul writes to the Ephesians, "Unto me who am less than the least of all saints was this grace given to preach unto the Gentiles the unspeakable riches of Christ." Some of those riches he proceeds to unfold but by no means all, and he makes no mention of some of the particulars in which, of course, he believed but all of which he never attempted to summarize in any statement of his central, single missionary purpose.

I think you make three great mistakes here (1) You confuse the statement of the aim of missions to proclaim the Gospel of Christ with the statement of the content of the message of the Gospel. (2) You allow your suspicion and distrust of others, your judging as you would not be judged, to deflect and pervert your view. When you call Jesus Christ "Lord and Master" you say the words are used honestly, but when I call Him so, the words are used dishonestly. This is "untrue and unjust." It is more than that. Paul says explicitly, "No man can say Jesus is Lord but in the Holy Spirit." You appear flatly to dispute Paul and to believe that men can call Jesus Lord by the evil spirit. Our Lord spoke some stern words about this kind of judgment. (3) You unmistakably imply that the failure specifically to mention certain great doctrines is evidence that those doctrines are not believed.

10. I will go on to deal specifically with this point. You say that "the vagueness which characterizes this statement (i.e., the statement of aim) also characterizes the whole booklet (i.e., 'The Foreign Missions Done For?') There is in it no mention of the virgin birth of our Lord, not the absolute necessity of belief in it for every missionary, no mention of the bodily resurrection, no mention of the full truthfulness of Scripture (based on the truthfulness of Scripture as such at all) no mention of the supernatural nature of Christ, no mention of the new birth of believers, no mention of justification by faith, no mention of the atoning death of Christ."

Before examining this statement and the implications which you put into it and the inferences which you draw out of it, I wish to make my position unmistakably clear. I am an evangelical Christian believer. I accept all the facts, all the doctrines, all the truths of the New Testament. I stated my convictions summarily in an article in the International Review of Mission, October 1927, on "Missionary Cooperation in Face of Doctrinal Differences", as follows:

"Before attempting to answer these questions, the writer of this paper ought perhaps, in order to avoid all misunderstanding, to state his own point of view. He accepts the whole of Christianity as set forth in the New Testament. He believes unqualifiedly every article of the Apostles' Creed. No language is adequate to state his conception of Christ. He believes that He is more and greater than any words can ever express, 'the Word made flesh,' God incarnate, reconciling the world to Himself, the only Saviour, our Lord and our God. He believes in the truthfulness of the record of Christ's life, including His miracles, and rejoices with great joy in the miracle of the Virgin Birth and of the real Resurrection of Christ and of His future;

personal advent. He believes that it is God alone who through Christ saves men, not by their characters, nor by any works of righteousness which they can do, but by His own grace through the death and life of His dear Son. As to the Bible, he accepts the doctrine of the Westminster Confession and regards its authority as supreme, not in faith only but also in the practice, conduct and relations of men. I am afraid this may seem to many very antiquated and unmodern, and the writer must be prepared to accept whatever limitations of value in the modern mind such views set upon his judgment as to the doctrinal limits of tolerance in the doctrinal basis of cooperation."

As to our Lord, I spoke fully and definitely in the Moderator's sermon at the General Assembly in 1928. I am no theologian and I did not and cannot speak in terms of systematized theology (which I respect and believe to be necessary) but I believe in the Saviour and His glory and His redeeming work as deeply and truly and lovingly as you can believe in Him. I tried to say this at the Assembly in Tulsa. These were some of the words I used:

"There is nothing good or great that we will not say about Jesus. There is no claim that we will not make for Him. There is naught that we can say about God that we will not say also about Jesus, 'the Son of His love; in whom we have our redemption, the forgiveness of our sins: who is the image of the invisible God, the first born of all creation; for in Him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through Him, and unto Him; and He is above all things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body the Church; who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things He might have the preeminence. For it was the good pleasure of the Father that in Him should all the fulness dwell; and through Him to reconcile all things unto Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things upon the earth, or things in the heavens.'

"We will say about Jesus all that all the creeds have said and then we will say that He is more than this. All that men have said or ever can say about His glory, His beauty, His power, His deity we will say. He is all this and He transcends all this. Here let us stand each for himself and all of us as Christ's Church and henceforth let no man trouble us nor we bear in our mind nor in our heart, in our spirit and in our body the marks of the Lord Jesus." . . . . .

"But all words are all short of the reality with regard

to Christ. If He were nothing but a good dead man who spoke and wrought as wisely as He knew long ago in Palestine, who died bravely on a Cross with no hate of those who did such hateful wrong, and over whose undisturbed grave the Syrian at its look down, then we should have much scruple lest we should wrong His memory with excess speech. Indeed long ago we should have found the adequate words to describe His humanity. But to us Jesus Christ is not a good dead man but God, the living God, our Risen and Living Saviour, and we will use all the language we have and deem it simple and poor to utter the wonder that is beyond all utterance.

"Nevertheless we can make our confession.  
We confess Him in the august symbols of our historic creeds and confessions."

You may not call these "vague and evasive" words. You may not call them, as you do call the sincere and earnest utterances of our missionaries and of the secretaries of our Board, "perfunctory lip service." If you do, you will have to answer before our Lord and Judge; may you will receive even now in your mind and character God's inevitable penalty upon such un-Christian and un-Christlike judgment of a man on his fellow Christians. Let us both be mindful of our Master's words. (Matt. VII. 1-4).

Now let us examine this present criticism. (1) You say that my little book does not mention the Virgin Birth and its place in Christian faith. That is true. Neither is it mentioned in your book or "The Origin of Paul's Religion." You set forth the details of Jesus' life which were known to Paul but you make no mention at all of the Virgin Birth. The single mention of it in your book "What is Faith?" is in the question which is asked in a purely incidental and secondary way, "What has it (i.e. simple trust like that of the Centurion) to do with a question of fact like the question of the Virgin birth?" (p. 31). You go on on this same page to state that we need to know about Jesus. You do not mention the Virgin Birth. These two books are serious and competent theological studies. One might expect to find clear mention in them, especially in a discussion of "What is Faith?" of all that the writer deemed essential. You omit the Virgin Birth in these studies of the content of Paul's Gospel and of the Christian faith and then condemn my poor little booklet on our foreign mission duty because I do not mention a truth which I had no occasion to mention here but which I joyfully believe and have set forth elsewhere at greater length and particularity than I have seen or heard of in any writings of yours.

And are you prepared to condemn every book that does not set forth the Virgin Birth of our Lord and of absolute necessity of belief in it for all Christian preachers and teachers? Dr. Patton has written a noble book on "Fundamental Christianity." Surely he will deal with the Virgin Birth here as you require. Does he? Not once, <sup>1</sup> does he mention it.

mention of the Virgin Mary and the Roman doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. In Dr. A.A. Hodge's "Popular Lectures on Theological Themes" there is, if I am not mistaken, a single reference to the Virgin Mary and not a word about the theological significance of the Virgin Birth. Even in the three great volumes of Charles Hodge's "Systematic Theology" the index does not mention "Virgin Birth." It refers only to Roman ideas of the Virgin Mary. And in the text the fact and the doctrine of the Virgin Birth receive almost no attention. Under "Particular Passages which teach the Divinity of Christ" no reference is made to the Virgin Birth. Under the Person of Christ there are a few references to it, chiefly relating to the human nature in Jesus and the substance of His body. There is no reference whatever to the place of the Virgin Birth in the Christian message nor any such treatment of its theological significance as one finds, for example, in Du Bose's "Soteriology of the New Testament."

Do not misunderstand me. I believe in the Virgin Birth and I regard it, in Dr. George Alexander's words, as "a peculiarly precious truth." And I know that of course Dr. Patton believes it. But the idea that failure to mention it implies disbelief and that every book which omits it is unevangelical is untrue and irrational. Consider the result of the application of your requirements here to the volume entitled "Biblical and Theological Studies by the Faculty of Princeton of the Founding of the Seminary" (1912). It is a great volume of 634 pages. Here, surely, one would feel that he had a right to expect a full statement of the Gospel which the Seminary was established to teach, a presentation of the essential and fundamental teaching of Christianity, setting forth with special clearness the Christian message for our time. Dr. Patton in his opening paper says, "My theme embraces the entire circle of theological learning." Your criticism of our statement of aim is that it is not enough to speak of the circle: all the contents of the circle must be explicitly spoken of also, and you name certain contents whose verbal omission is proof of unevangelicalism and of a vague and evasive insincerity. Well, let us see. This huge and sincere theological volume contains not a single reference to the Virgin Birth. The one reference to the Second Coming of Christ is in a paper by Dr. Erdman. That is the only one. There is a paper on "Sin and Grace in the Koran" but none on "Sin and Grace in the Gospel." There is a "Study of Jonathan Edwards" and another of "The Aramaic of Daniel" and another of "The Shepherd of Hermas" but none of "the truthfulness of the Scriptures", of "the new birth of believers" of "justification by faith", of "the atoning death of Christ." What if one should use your own words: "What sort of a Gospel is it from which all that makes a Gospel has thus been left out? In this vague message the offence of the Cross is done away but so is the glory and the power." These words might far more justly be used here than with regard to my little missionary book. This is a great theological presentation of the Gospel offered in commemoration of a century's life of a great school

whose business it is to set forth the content of the Gospel. But I will not use your words. I think the volume is a worthy Christian production and one of the best things in it is the passage in your paper, where, more adequately than any where else, you recognize (p.575) the Pauline doctrine of the Resurrection. And I think its omissions are justified on the ground on which you justify omissions in Paul's Epistles, namely, "It is omitted not because it is unimportant but on the contrary because it is fundamental" (p.562). I think that is a valid justification of the "Biblical and Theological Studies" with their vast omissions. I think it is valid in the case of many omissions in your books. Will you not be equally fair-minded toward others?

(2) You say there is "no mention of the bodily resurrection" in my little book. The Resurrection is mentioned more than once and by that I mean the bodily Resurrection of our Lord, but I did not use the phrase. Neither have you used it in a single one of your three books which I have read. And it is not used in the New Testament? The New Testament is content to speak of the Resurrection, meaning the real and actual Resurrection of our Lord and I am content with the language of the New Testament. And as to the reality of the bodily Resurrection of our Lord I hold with Paul that it is the supreme fact and truth in Christianity.

(3) You say there is "no mention of the full truthfulness of Scripture (indeed no mention of Scripture, as such, at all)." Again you are mistaken. The Bible, the New Testament, the Word of God are all mentioned repeatedly. The full truthfulness of Scripture is everywhere assumed. I accept joyfully, and as a missionary to accept, the doctrine of our Standards with regard to the Scriptures. But I must honestly say that there is something which appears to be not altogether candid, I will not say "evasive", in your own reference to the inspiration of the Scriptures. One notes the care with which you refrain from facing certain issues and from using the language of some of those whom you allow to think that you agree with them. And do you or do you not agree with Dr. Patton's position in "Fundamental Christianity"?

(4) You say there is "no mention of the supernatural return of Christ". Two of your three books make no mention of it. I find no mention of it in A. A. Hodge's "Popular Lectures." As for me I have cherished this faith and hope for forty two years. My boyhood days were spent at Princeton Seminary, and the orthodox of the orthodox, spiritualized this truth completely out of the Bible but I learned it at the Northfield Conference when I was a Sophomore in college and I have lived with it and in it ever since and have fully borne some reproach because of it. I wrote a little book on it and have again and again preached it. I think I have borne tent times the witness to it which you have borne. But it did not seem to me to be necessary to introduce it into this little defense of missions. I was writing to defend foreign missions against their enemies. I did not realize that they would need to be defended from their friends.

(5) You say there is "no mention of the birth of believers, and no mention of justification by faith, no mention of the atoning death of Christ." You qualify this by recognizing "one bare mention of the Crucified and ever-living Lord." What would you think of the spirit of the statement that there was "one bare mention of the Virgin Birth" and "one bare mention of revelation" in "What is Faith?" But again you are mistaken. Those truths are either stated or implied or assumed in my booklet. More than that were not called for in the nature and purpose of the little book. It

was not an attempt to set forth the content of the Christian message. It was simply a short and earnest presentation of the claim that Christ is the only and sufficient Saviour.

11. The claims of Christ are not kept in the background. The little book is full of their assertion. It maintains, through out, the sole sufficiency and universality of the Gospel: "Christ needs nothing from any man. No other religious teacher has any contribution to make to Him. In Him is all the fulness of the Godhead. He is the final and sufficient revelation of God and the only Saviour and Redeemer of man. This is the New Testament revelation. It is the solid and unalterable foundation of foreign missions. Foreign missions are not a search for a new and better religion. They are not an attempt to find something that is not already in Christ. They are the effort of those who have heard of Christ to take what they have heard to the whole world in order that all men may, through a personal knowledge of Him, be brought to the Father." (p. 88) It conceives Christ, in the Scriptures, to be "the unconscious Desire of the Nations, the one answer to all the problems of the soul of man, his one Saviour and his only hope. A fundamental conviction for our Church is the work at home and abroad is this conviction that it has in Christ the sufficient Gospel. The Church is not looking for a new and different Gospel. It has found the one and only Saviour." "The Christian faith is a truth and a treasure greater than any other that we possess. It is our duty to share it and to appeal to all men everywhere to take it as their own. It is theirs by the same title that makes it ours and there are depths in it which will only be found as we explore them together apprehending with all hearts, as alone we can, the full dimension of the love of God, and all attaining, as the only way in which any of us can attain, the unity of the faith and the stature of the fulness of Christ. The truth that we need to keep in view and that it is easy to forget is that Christ is greater than all our thoughts about Him and that as the whole world comes to know Him and to accept His lordship new glories hitherto not seen in Him will appear. But these glories are in Christ. They are not in the religions or racial cultures of Asia. And the revelation of them will not come from those religions or cultures. It will come from Christ as the result of a larger belief by mankind in Him and a larger application of His grace and power to human life throughout the world. This is the lesson we need to remember. Our ideas about Christ may be true as far as they go, but they do not go far enough. We may not hold that they are complete. But Christ is complete. In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." (p. 89). "Christ is absolute and final in His person and His religion are to prevail absolutely and finally". "It is Christ that we Christians owe to all men here and throughout the world. In this position, to be regarded as narrow and fanatical, than to admit such considerations. Only we are sure that the same judgment must apply to the whole doctrine of the New Testament. The foreign missions enterprise is more than ever based upon precisely this view of the uniqueness and sufficiency of Christ. The early Church believed that there was no other name given unto man whereby they might be saved. All men everywhere needed Christ and Christ was enough. Neither Greek, nor Roman, nor Semitic religion had any correction to make or any supplement to add to Him. The modern foreign missions enterprise is not on the same ground. It is the endeavor to make Christ known to all mankind, that all mankind together may live in Him and find in Him more and greater treasures than any one race or any one soul can find alone. Each race and each soul for itself can find in Him all that it knows that it needs, but only mankind altogether will discern the full scope of human need and the infinite fulness of Christ's supply. He is able to supply the full needs of each soul only because He is the whole world's sufficient Saviour:

!In Him is life provided

for all mankind and man!

"I would rejoice to see the missionary enterprise brought in our day more clearly and loyally and uncompromisingly than ever to those fundamental ideas with which it began, and to see it disentangled, as far as we can disentangle it, from a great many of the compromising fellowships in which it finds itself, and released to its pure, elementary, rational work down at the foundations of human life in relating men one by one to Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour." (p. 10) "I grant that a man's judgment here will depend altogether on what his estimate is of Jesus Christ. If Jesus Christ means nothing to him, why, he will not owe any necessity on the part of other men for knowing about him. But if Jesus Christ is all there is for us, if we know that He is all there is, then we cannot but recognize the inherent obligation in wealth like that to be shared with all who have not yet come into its possession." (p. 108) "The missionary enterprise is the proclamation of the One Name given under Heaven among men, the only one we must believe, and there is nothing in any non-Christian religion to be added to the glory of Christ or to the fulness of the revelation of Christ, however we so imperfectly apprehend it still. Inside the Christian spirit burns the old revelation that glowed in St. Paul's heart to whom it would have been 'useful', if he had not shared the Christ he knew. Would that we might get back again to the foreign missionary enterprise in the pure, naked spiritual reality of it, as Christ called that little group of men and women around Him at the first, who had no titles back of them, who were not going to speak for any race. They were just a little group of individuals who Christ had redeemed and who knew their Redeemer, and He told them to go out and share what they had in Him with all the world. This is what the missionary enterprise has always been. That is what it is today - Christianity stripped of all accessories and secondary accoutrements, just Christ, Himself, to be shared to the whole world for which He died." (p. 141).

These are only a few expressions from this little book. It is a poor little thing but it is not the value and evenness of an evangelical thing you know. And of the hundred of evangelical men and women who have written or spoken about the book you are the only one of whom I have heard who condemns it. One of the very best and most grateful of the letters of commendation is from a well known, Dr. Albertus Pieters, of Holland, Michigan, who congratulates his theology as you or I can never hope to be. There is enough evidence in the words of letters it has that the little book has fortified evangelical conviction and confirmed true missionary devotion. I will not quote them - yet I will quote from several that you may know the feeling of some not one whit less zealous than you:

"I have just finished the reading of your book, so kindly sent to me, entitled 'Are Foreign Missions Done For?' It is now after twelve o'clock, P.M. I cannot express to you the joy I received in reading it. After having much of my former zeal for missions dampened by recent post graduate studies in the University of - and the coldness of the church that I have tried to interest in a feeble way, I now rededicate myself to the task of mission and resolve to do my best to give and stimulate living in the little church I am called to serve.

"I can fully appreciate the difference between 'The religion of the good dead man' and the 'Religion of a good living God.'"

"On the day that your little book 'Are Foreign Missions Done For?' came to us, I read it and decided to write you at once in regard to a further distribution of it. I probably felt that you knew your own business, but in the light of your college principles recently received I know my first impulse was right.

"I would like to have the whole thing, or perhaps only the chapter

'Christ is Enough' printed for large distribution among our college organizations."

"The more I read this volume the more I am impressed with its value and importance, coming especially at this time. It is the ablest defense or justification of Foreign Missions that has yet been sent forth. It will be sure to strengthen those who are faltering and win over those who are hostile or who are lukewarm and indifferent. The great Head of the Church must have put it into your heart to write it and I am sure will use it in stirring the whole Church up to a renewed sense of its great responsibility in regard to the whole matter."

"For quite a long time I have wanted to write to you. After reading your recent booklet, 'Are Foreign Missions Done For?' I cannot refrain from writing. I want to thank you with all my heart for the stand and the message in that booklet. Fundamentally, while defending the foreign mission movement from severe criticisms, it is a call back to the original motive of foreign missions. I found myself in complete agreement with every page of the book."

"I have just read 'Are Foreign Missions Done For?' at my sitting and I can't resist saying how wonderful it is. To my mind it is the most unanswerable argument I have ever seen. I do hope somebody is giving it wide circulation. There is too much loose talk going about, even among people who know better, about one religion completing or complementing another. You are right, Christianity needs no completion - it is complete - it needs discovery."

"Reading this wonderful little book of yours I feel convinced that you still stand firm on the old reliable faith once delivered unto the Saints."

This last is from the "Church of the Lutheran Brethren." I am ashamed to have quoted these. I dare to use Paul's words: "I am 'b' come foolish; ye have compelled me."

12. There is much more in your statement which should be reviewed, but I have written quite enough and more than ought to have been required. I could answer some of your criticisms by quoting from your own books the statement of the very truths for which you condemn me. There are two things more of which I shall speak. (1) The first is this. I find myself in deep and thankful accord with almost all of your great convictions. I am full of admiration and gratitude for "The Begin of Paul's Mission" and agree with you in your emphasis on the historicity and supernaturalness of the facts of Christianity's beginning and the necessity of the great Christian doctrinal and ethical truths from these facts, on the need of reasoned doctrinal statement and defense, on the great doctrines of sin and faith, on the Person of Christ, on miracles, on Christianity as a message as well as an experience and a life, and I might go on with the long list of all the evangelical convictions. When I differ from you I do it at the points where, as it seems to me, you differ from the Scriptures. Some great Scripture truths you ignore or qualify. You twist or interpret some passages out of their plain and obvious statement. You use non-scriptural, even



anti-Scriptural forms of thought and expression. When apparently contradictory ideas or statements are found in the New Testament you modify one or the other or both to fit your scheme of thought instead of accepting them both just as they are without qualification as parts of larger truth or life which comprehends them both without any minimization. You do no justice to Paul's moral and social applications of the Gospel and you even indulge in a fling at non-sinners who read the sixth chapter of Ephesians to their people. There are illustrations in your paper which we are considering. There you use some words in your statement of essential doctrine which are not found in the Scriptures at all. I can state my convictions wholly in the very words of the Scriptures. You use repeatedly the phrase "the gospel of the Cross". This phrase is not in the Scriptures. The New Testament knows "the Gospel", "the Gospel of Christ", "the Gospel of the Kingdom", "the Gospel of peace," "the Gospel of God," "the everlasting Gospel", but it nowhere uses the phrase "the Gospel of the Cross" and the use which you make of that phrase implies interpretations both of the idea of the "Gospel" and of the idea of the Cross which do not do justice to the full New Testament teaching. The Gospel is not the Gospel of the Cross only, not even of the Cross of Christ only. The Gospel is the Gospel of Christ which includes the Cross and what preceded the Cross and what followed the Cross. The same defect marks your use of the idea of "salvation only by the Cross," and your criticism of my reference to the "redeeming life" of Christ. Your view certainly does not do full justice to the Scriptures nor does it represent the true Scriptural proportion of truth. You say in "What is Faith?" "Christ touches our lives, according to the New Testament through the Cross." (p. 143. But compare Heb. II, 18; IV., 15, 16.) "The Cross of Christ is the special basis of Christian faith". (p. 144- But compare I. Cor. XV. 17). "The Cross by which salvation was brought." (your statement; But compare Rom. I. 18, V. 1). You do not and cannot too much exalt the Cross of Christ, but you can and you do fail to set it in its Scriptural place and relationship and you neglect to relate it adequately to the full truth of the New Testament. You do not give their full Scriptural place to the Incarnation prior to the Cross or to the Resurrection and many other aspects of the full truth of the Gospel. You justly emphasize the fact of the Resurrection and its evidential significance but you do not adequately set forth its relation to the redeeming work of Christ, its place in our salvation, or its practical and dynamic significance in the life of the believer as the New Testament sets forth all these aspects. You do indeed in brief references couple the Cross and the Resurrection in their relation to salvation. In "What is Faith?" you speak of "the Gospel of redemption through the Cross and resurrection of Christ" (p.p. 154, 151). Also "The Origin of Paul's Religion," p. 157. In view of your criticism of my use once of the word "Spirit" with a small "s", or notes that you habitually write "Cross" and "Resurrection", though not earlier, with a capital and the "resurrection" without it.) But you criticize my truly Scriptural reference to the "redeeming life" of Christ (Rom. VI., 1-11; VIII., 4; VIII.:1-14)

The New Testament teaching is far richer and freer than your view appears to be. It teaches not that the Cross saves us or that we are saved by the Cross. It teaches that Christ saves us, and that He saves us by Himself, by His death and by His life. How rich is Paul's orientation and proportion of these truths! "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." (Rom. V., 8-11). Let any one take his New Testament and read it through,

marking every reference to the Cross and the death of Christ and every reference to the Resurrection and the life of Christ and compare the result with the proportions of these glorious facts and doctrines in your emphasis. "Christ died for our sins" you quote often and you cannot quote too often. But only occasionally do you add "according to the Scriptures" and still less frequently do you complete the quotation and add "And He hath been raised on the third day according to the Scriptures." Of course you believe this and rejoice in it, but you do not relate these truths as Paul does and you substitute the Cross which might have been without the Resurrection for the plan of the Resurrection which included the Cross. The Cross without the Resurrection would not have saved us, Paul proceeds in this very chapter to declare in language which takes our breath away: "If Christ hath not been raised, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins" (I. Cor. XV. 17) And one might go on to speak of Peter's teaching of the relation of the Resurrection to regeneration and salvation. This full Gospel of the New Testament is the glorious Gospel. I do not share your view that it can only be preached offensively. The Cross is indeed to many a stumbling block. Paul and Peter both realized and declared this. Paul also said: "Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, not to the church of God. Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved. Be ye imitators of me, even as I am of Christ. Giving no offence in anything, that the ministry be not blamed. But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." There is clearly in Paul's view a vast difference between the preaching of the offence of the Cross and the offensive preaching of the Cross. The word for "offence" which Paul uses in Gal. V. 11 and I. Cor. I. 23 and which Peter uses in I. Peter II. 8 is the very same which Paul uses in Rom. XIV. 13 and XVI. 17, and which the Saviour uses in His dreadful warning in Luke XVII. 1, 2, and which in the American Standard Revised is translated in all these passages not "offence" or "offend", but "stumbling block" or "cause to stumble." It were well if we remembered these words in our Christian fellowship within and in our proclamation of Christ and His Gospel to those who are without: "Then said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but that offences will come: but we will not be offended by them. It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones." "Let us not therefore judge one another say so: but judge this rather, that we may not put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way." I know that in the parallel passage in Matthew the words "little ones" are followed by the words "that believe in Me," but surely the Spirit of Christ would not have us think that the Tender Shepherd of His little ones, who left the ninety and nine safe sheep in the fold to hunt the one that was lost, would be pleased with the thought that His disciples should cause their fidelity by their success in "offending", in "causing to stumble" the feet that are out of the way.

And a great deal more might be said of the failure of your books to set forth "the full Scripture doctrine of the grace of God," to use your own phrase. But I do not suspect or reproach you as heretical or unevangelical. I believe that God and the Gospel and its grace are supernatural and infinite and in that they are, while we may know them surely and truly, we may know, as Paul himself says, only in part. But we are Christ's true disciples none the less, and we ought to love one another and walk together "comforted each of us by the other's faith", and making up each of us what is lacking in the other.

Perhaps you will be tempted to dismiss what I have just been saying as the simple, unsophisticated talk of one who is unacquainted in theological systematization and no scholar in the field of theological controversy. It is even so. I do not pretend to be anything but a simple, Bible-Christian who holds that under the grand liberty of our Confession he is free to believe all that he finds in the Scriptures as he finds it there and to reject whatever he sees which contradicts or deflects or undermines the rich and varied truth of the Scriptures. If in anything that I say here or elsewhere there is at variance with the Scriptures, if it declares what the Scriptures do not truly declare, or fails to declare what the Scriptures do truly declare, I shall be glad to have it shown and shall rejoicingly leave any error for the truth. Is this not evangelical?

(2) And now lastly, you say "What is the real impact of our Foreign Board upon the world? Is it the preaching of Christ crucified - not in some pale modern sense not as a thing upon which new light is shed by the death of soldiers in the war, but as a blessed mystery revealed in the Word of God? If it is, then we can support that Board?" I do not like the startling reference to the light which the sacrifice of life by men may help us to see in the divine fulness of the meaning of the death of Christ. But your question can be answered with an answer absolutely flat and clear. I ask you to read Dr. George Alexander's sermon at the Commencement of the Board and the Missions in 1911 on "The Gospel of Paul." There the Gospel is described which the Board exists to spread abroad. The Foreign Board exists and its missionaries are appointed and maintained for one supreme purpose, namely, to proclaim to the world the Gospel of Jesus Christ, Incarnate, Crucified, Risen, Alive for Evermore, the Sinless One, the only Saviour, "who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who only hath immortality, dwelling in light unapproachable; whom no man hath seen nor can see; to whom be honor and power eternal. Amen."

I said at the outset that I would speak finally of your paper as a whole. Perhaps, however, it is hardly necessary to do this except to say that the particular items of evidence which you have presented as justifying your negative answer to the query "Can Evangelical Christians support our Foreign Board?" appear to me to be inadequate and, as I have sought to show, so unounded, that one wearing honest and brotherly Christian views could have rested upon them to prove an inquiry and so draw a proposal as the establishment of a rival foreign missionary agency in our Church, independent of the General Assembly and supported by members of our Church who proclaim their fellow members to be unevangelical. And you rest this inquiry and this proposal on unwarranted impressions regarding a few quotations on the "Reference Blank", a few thoroughly sensible and right letters from Mr. Bailey in explanation, a criticism of a Scriptural statement of our missionary aim, a few random and detached quotations from things that I have written, a mass of your own suspicions, and arguments from silences which your own books would not bear. My utterances which you have quoted, I believe, both true and Scriptural but you might have quoted, if you had will or knew, a great mass of statements in other of my books which you could not silence as you have attempted there in your paper. I am a little devoted to scholarship, could not give his time to such a simple book as mine, but they are loyal books, and their teaching has sought to be faithful to our Divine Lord and His Word.

The paper, as a whole, is a "truth and beauty" as it is called. It is not worthy of you or of the Gospel or of the Christianity of the world. And I do earnestly trust that what I have said in this letter will lead you to lay it aside, to dismiss your distrust and to bid us rally and faithfully in our great task of carrying to the non-Christian people the Gospel of Christ, "the full Scripture doctrine of the grace of God." Do not look at the real work before us here at home - in its origin and growth, in its standards of moral and social standards, in its infidelity, in its imperfections and uncertainties of faith and life in the Church, in the need of an every hour for Christ. Contend for the Faith within the Church but with equal zeal proclaim it to those who are without.

and now one more quotation from what you have written, not in this present statement of yours with its proposal of division, as to what is our Church and its work, but in the closing paragraph of your book "Christianity and Literalism."

"Is there no room for strife? Is there no place of suffering where we are all prepared for the battle of life? Is there no place where two or three can gather in Jesus' name, to forget for the moment all those things that divide nation from nation and race from race, to forget human pride, to forget the passions of war, to forget the puzzling problems of industrial strife, and to unite in ever lasting gratitude at the foot of the Cross? If there be such a place, then that is the house of God and that the gate of heaven. Can't you enter the threshold of that house will go forth a river that will revive the weary world."

Yes, this is the place. But once we have entered we cannot stop at the Cross. Beyond that there is an empty tomb and a risen and living Lord. "Who is like Him in the likeness of His Death", shall we not also be united with Him and therefore with one another "in the likeness of His Resurrection." Do not, my friends, put away all this bit of railing and contention and be kind and tender-hearted and truthful? And can we not be united in the same way to such a needless controversy as a controversy like this between you and me? Can we not give our lives and all our strength to better and truer things? If not Paul's counsel, "walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time," doubly applicable to our relationship and our work with the company of us who truly love and wish truly to serve our Common Lord?

If what I have written does not avail to persuade you and if you still think that it is your duty to publish your paper, surely it is only fair and right that my answer should be published with it. In that case I am prepared to meet you properly to share of the expense. But, my dear friend, there is a more excellent way.

Very faithfully yours,

April 30, 1929

Professor J. Gresham Machen, D.D.,  
Box A., Princeton  
New Jersey

My dear Dr. Machen:

I have already acknowledged the receipt of your letter of April 12, 1929, with your accompanying paper entitled "Can Evangelical Christians Support our Foreign Board?" which you asked me to examine and criticize in order that if it contained anything "untrue or unjust" you might correct it. You courteously added that you would be grateful for any assistance that I might render to this end. I am very glad to respond and to try to help you to an affirmative answer to the question in your paper. I believe that my own Christian convictions are not less evangelical than yours, and I believe that our foreign missionary work and workers are also truly evangelical. If I were not convinced of both of these things I should not be associated with our Foreign Board or with the Presbyterian Church. And I use the word evangelical, as will appear, in its plain and honest sense of fidelity to the full Scriptural warrant and content of the Gospel.

I will try first to indicate particular points in your paper which appear to me to be "untrue or unjust" and then I shall speak of the paper as a whole.

1. Your contrast and implied antagonism between the "humanitarian service" of the Board and "propagating the Gospel of Jesus Christ as it is contained in the whole Word of God" appears to me to be unjust and untrue and un-Scriptural. It is of course possible to divide the first from the second but not the second from the first. The Gospel includes human service. The New Testament is full of that principle. It insists on such service as one of the evidences and fruits of fidelity to the Gospel. Furthermore, it is by the expression of the Gospel in deeds as well as in words that the Gospel was preached and is ever to be preached. Indeed, in many languages there were no words which had the significance of the English or Greek words embodying the truths of the Gospel and in these languages old words had to be taken and given a new content by life, as the Incarnation and its interpretation did at the beginning. It is true that our Board is carrying on a great body of human service and any one who is desirous of doing such work can not find any better opportunity for it than here, but our Board has always made it perfectly clear that in our policy all philanthropic work is tributary to and associated with the primary aim of evangelization. I have expressed my own convictions on this point again and again. One quotation from "Missionary Principles and Practice" (1902) will suffice: "In all use of philanthropic effort, such as medical missions, relief work, etc., as a method of mission work, the dominant and determining aim must

be evangelistic. Such work is useful as securing friendship, removing prejudice, representing the helpful, unselfish spirit of Christianity, contributing to the preaching of Christ, and the revelation of Him as Saviour and Lord, the source of all life and hope, and as relieving suffering; but it is not the responsibility of the foreign missionary enterprise to care for the sickness and suffering of the world. Times of critical need may occur, as in great famines and pestilence, when a broad liberty of action must be recognized; but in general, the aim of our philanthropic work should be to contribute directly to the preaching of the Gospel, the establishment of the Christian Church, and to the fostering of that Christian spirit which will provide, through the native Church which is growing up and through the people themselves, the salutary fruits of Christianity in philanthropic and humanitarian effort. As a missionary method, philanthropic work should ordinarily be limited, therefore, by the possibility of its evangelistic utilization and influence. A small development of such work contributing powerfully in the direction indicated is better than a large development of but feeble or indirect evangelistic influence." I think it is an error in your paper and in all your books that you do not adequately recognize and set forth the full doctrine of the Scriptures, namely, that the Gospel is to be preached not by word only but also and not less, or less fundamentally, by deeds of love and mercy. And thus preached by word and deed by our Presbyterian Church's Missions true fruitage has followed. Converts have been won and churches have been established as numerous and of as true New Testament character as have resulted from the work of any other missions. You are invited to make any comparison you please, including the undenominational Missions which you have sometimes praised for what you regarded as their superior doctrinal fidelity.

2. It is not for me to presume to defend the General Assembly and the Church at large against your expressions of distrust or your intimations that the Church and the Assembly are not really evangelical. I believe that our Church is evangelical. I wish with you that it were better instructed in the doctrine and more animated by the Spirit of the Gospel, but I believe that it is officially and really a truly evangelical Church and I believe, too, that the Foreign Board has not lost its confidence. There are, of course, individuals, like yourself, who feel and express distrust, but I believe you and they are mistaken in this and that the Church is warmly and evangelically loyal both to the Gospel and to the Board and the cause which it represents.

Perhaps I should say a word regarding the footnote referring to the General Assembly in 1927 when, against my reluctance and protest, I was made Moderator. As to my action in connection with Judicial Case No. 1, I erred in unwittingly failing to note and to prevent the voting of members of New York Synod on either side of the question, to the extent to which any of them did vote. These were not, however, the only votes illegally cast. And there were other and graver errors antecedent to these for which I was not responsible and which I could not prevent. For the good and honor of the Church it is better to pass them over, but if this matter is to be brought forward the whole story should be unflinchingly told. I candidly summarized the situation at the meeting of the Assembly the following morning, and the Assembly unanimously sustained my position.

I note your depreciation of the worth of any endorsement of the Foreign Board by the General Assembly but perhaps you would think more kindly of the resolutions of the Assembly at Grand Rapids in 1924 adopted on recommendation of the Standing Committee on Foreign Missions, of which Dr. MacLennan was

Chairman and Dr. Robert Dick Wilson was a member, with regard to union and cooperative enterprises, the selection of missionary candidates, the use of schools and hospitals, and the proclamation of the Gospel which, however, the Committee did not feel bound to describe and define. These were four of the resolutions:

"That while maintaining loyally the policy established by past General Assemblies in repeated enactments with regard to cooperation with other Evangelical bodies in our Foreign Missionary Work the Board be directed to exercise due care with regard to the Evangelical character of all such union and cooperative enterprises, and if there should arise in the work of these enterprises a situation in which teachings unsound or injurious to the Evangelical Faith are given, the Board, as it has declared to be its policy, should either secure the correction of such a situation or failing such withdraw from further participation.

"That the Board be commended for its care in the selection and appointment of Candidates for the Foreign Field, and that they be requested to continue to exercise the most scrupulous care in this regard.

"That we rejoice in all the courage in which in home and Church, in hospital and school, by word and by the printed page, Christ has been preached to men, and we assure the Missionaries and native Churches of our hope and prayer that the program of simple and direct Evangelism may be so increased that the Gospel may be carried to all the people for whose evangelization we are responsible.

"That in this hour when the world's need of Christ is so manifest and desperate, when the opportunities are so great, and new doors of entrance are opened into lands like Afghanistan, which have been hitherto closed, when young men and women are offering themselves freely for service, when our Missionaries and Churches with which they are uniting are eager for a great advance, when the problems of men and of nations and of races cry out, consciously or unconsciously, for Christ as their only solution, when the experience of the past year has revealed anew to the Church the adequate resources which are available to faith and love through the grace of God, this Assembly here and now dedicates itself and calls upon the Church to consecrate herself afresh to a new obedience to the last command of our glorified Lord and to a full acceptance of His Leadership in the supreme task of making the Gospel known to all mankind and of establishing His Kingdom over all the earth."

3. You describe the impression which you say is made upon the minds of Princeton Seminary students by their conferences with representatives of our Foreign Board. The two representatives of our Board with whom the students have most contact are members of the faculty of Princeton Seminary and the full evangelical loyalty of their personal convictions has, I think, not been questioned. It has on the other hand been vouched for repeatedly by the Board of Directors and is trusted through out the Church. As to the Candidate Department of the Board the best evidence of its attitude is in its acts. It has not recommended the declination or discouragement of a single Princeton Seminary student because of doctrinal convictions. The only specific case which you cite, of the young man recently who had been working in the Continuing Presbyterian Church in Canada, met with no discouragement whatever. He was a most desirable candidate, and was at once and joyfully appointed.

The men wanted for foreign missions are men who firmly believe and who know and have experienced the Gospel of the New Testament, and who are able and ready to go out to preach by word and life "the glorious Gospel of the blessed God" in the fulness of its New Testament meaning. So far from discouraging such men, the Board is eagerly seeking for them. And when they are found they are counselled to stand fast in the Scriptural faith and to go forth to proclaim the message of the Gospel in all their life and work and teaching. You say there is no clear evidence of this. On the other hand I think there is clear evidence in the instructions given in the annual conference with new missionaries and otherwise. For a single example I refer you to Dr. George Alexander's sermon at the Post War Conference of the Board and all the Missions, entitled, "The Gospel of Paul."

4. You say that your impression of misgiving and distrust is strengthened by the blank which is sent to those whose names the candidate for missionary appointment gives as references, and you single out for criticism from the fifth items of character and equipment which are mentioned these three - "tolerance of the point of view of others," "desire to progress in spiritual truth" and "sanity", explained as "absence of tendency to extreme views." Surely you cannot mean to imply that these are undesirable qualities in Christian missionaries! There are, to be sure, limits to toleration, just as to some other virtues, and it is not always easy to fix these limits. In your book on "The Origin of Paul's Religion" you carry as a scholar with great urbanity, the limits of tolerance of the point of view of others far beyond the point where any one would dream of carrying them in cooperation in missionary service, but there would be nothing but pure separate individualism, as you have recognized in your books, if we were not prepared to work together within the evangelical fellowship in tolerance of the point of view of others. The question of the blank, as Mr. Hadley pointed out to you, covers simply that. And this Charles Hodge defended and advocated at the meeting of the Evangelical Alliance in New York in 1875 and Dr. Patton has nobly set forth in "Fundamental Christianity" and Dr. E. D. Warfield has emphasized in his Minority Report to the General Assembly of 1928 when, referring to our troubles at Princeton Seminary, he says, "In my judgment the root and ground of the difficulties are embodied in personalities, and so far as they are not embodied in personalities, they are embodied in the lack of that tolerance which we so strongly claim for ourselves and so generally deny to others." The question on the reference blank involves no more and nothing different from this - the ability of Christian men who hold the evangelical convictions of our Church to work together in harmony and good will and mutual tolerance.

And as to "desire to progress in spiritual truth" - that is one of the clearest admonitions of the New Testament: "Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." "Long for the spiritual milk which is without guile that ye may grow thereby unto salvation." "To walk worthily of the Lord unto all pleasing, bearing fruit in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God." And how many more passages! It is men and women who long and strive for the fulfilment of these possibilities in their own lives who are wanted in Christian service at home and abroad.

And "sanity" meaning "absence of tendency to extreme views." Certainly the opposite of these qualities is not desirable. How carefully in your books do you guard against certain extreme views regarding the millennial hope, regarding mysticism, regarding extreme intellectualism and extreme experimentalism, and many others! And how earnestly Paul counsels men: "Let your moderation, your forbearance, be known unto all men." "God gave us a spirit of power and Love and of a sound mind." "Soberness" is one of his emphasized virtues and Peter's, too. "Be ye therefore sober and watch unto prayer." "Wherefore girding up the loins



of your mind, be sober and set your hope perfectly on the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." This is true sanity, the sanity desired in missionaries. (Cf. Gal. V. 23, II Peter I.6).

And note the place of these questions and their relationship to other questions in the blank. "Tolerance of the point of view of others" is part of the eighth general subject. "Teamwork Qualities." Four are mentioned, as follows: "a. Fact. b. Tolerance of the point of view of others. c. Self-control. d. Flexibility. (Subordination when best of one's own ambitions and preferences.)" The tenth subject of inquiry is "Spiritual Qualities" and the subheads are: "a. Christian character. b. Vital religious experience. c. Spiritual influence on others." The eleventh subject is "Promise of Development in the Christian life" and the subheads are: "a. Desire to progress in spiritual truth. b. Eagerness for Christian service. c. Sanity. (Absence of tendency to extreme views)." Then follow questions as to the experience of the candidate in various forms of practical work and Christian service.

To twist these simple and reasonable and wise questions and to freight them with suspicion is an untrue and unjust note in your paper.

5. You say that in the "Candidate Reference Blank" "there is not one word to determine the candidate's intellectual attainments as ever against his intellectual capacity; there is not one word to determine his knowledge of the contents of the Gospel." That is covered (1) by the constitutional requirements of the Church with regard to the examinations of ordained candidates by their Presbyteries which are reported to the Board. (Frequent actions of the General Assembly have dealt with this matter of the functions of Mission Boards and Presbyteries in this regard. The question as respects the Foreign Board was passed upon by the Board and by the General Assembly in 1902 and 1905 when Dr. W. M. Paxton and Dr. Robert Russell Booth and Dr. John Fox, who were then members of the Board, were particularly concerned in the decisions reached, and in 1895, 1910 and 1921. (2) By the three questions to which most space is given and which are deemed the most important questions on the "Candidate Reference Blank", namely, "Could you recommend appointment?" "If not, what would seem to be the weak points or faults which in your judgment should disqualify the applicant from foreign mission work?" "Unhampered by any questions, please state frankly your own opinion as to the general fitness of the candidate for the work of a foreign missionary?" (3) By the inclusion in the Personal Application Blank filled out by every layman and woman candidate of the four Constitutional questions propounded by Presbyteries to candidates for ordination. (4) By the following questions: "What is your habit in devotional Bible study and prayer?" "Do you believe that in every form of mission work the paramount duty of every missionary is to make Jesus Christ known as Saviour, Lord and Master?" "Is it your purpose to make this the chief aim of your missionary service, no matter what special duties may be assigned to you?"

(5) By requiring from every candidate, ordained and unordained, a separate letter. The requirement is thus expressed on all application blanks:

"WRITE A SEPARATE LETTER giving in brief: (a) A sketch of your life; (b) Your Christian development and experience; (c) Your motives in seeking missionary appointment; (d) The content of your Christian Message."

As explaining what is involved the following statement is sent to every candidate who is not under care and examination of a Presbytery:

"The Content of your Christian Message."

This question is vital. You propose to go to a foreign land in order to propagate the Christian religion, either by public address, or by personal contacts, or by both. It is of utmost importance that you should have a clear idea of what this religion is. Any positive statements upon Christian faith and practice which you wish to make should be set forth here, and will naturally include your idea of God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, the redemptive work of Christianity, duties to your fellow men, the Bible, the Church, together with such other leading truths as you would expect to embody in your message. Such condensation is desired as may be consistent with a satisfactory setting forth of your views."

Possibly you may never have seen this last statement. It has been in use for the past six years.

In the light of these statements I think your criticism of the blanks is untrue and unjust.

6. You criticize also the question on the application blank with regard to the ability of the candidate to "Cheerfully accept and support the decision of a majority, even if the decision is contrary to your (his) own opinions," and you are dissatisfied with Mr. Hadley's explanation that this does not refer to theological convictions but to capacity to work with others happily in attending to our main common business and in pursuing our definite and united aim even though there may be differences of opinion over questions of method and policy and judgment, and other things too. Such ability to work with others is certainly important. In the Shantung Mission in China there were three strong personalities - Dr. Nevius, Dr. Mateer and Dr. Corbett. These men were wide apart in their opinions as to missionary policy and method, but they were able to adjust themselves and to establish and carry forward one of the best missions of our Church. Mr. Hadley was right in interpreting this question in this sense, as raising not the issue of evangelical theological views, which are the expected basis of missionary appointment, but "the question of temperament and ability to work in fullest harmony with people in the small group which is usually found in a mission station."

The question on the application blank is an old, old question. It has been used for many years; in its present form for the past seven years. It has never had any reference to theological views. They are covered, as I have pointed out, in other ways.

7. You criticize also the two questions which emphasize the "paramount duty" and "the chief aim" of each missionary "to make Jesus Christ known as Saviour, Lord and Master." Surely this is just what the Church wants to be assured of in its foreign missionaries, that every one of them will set the spiritual, evangelistic purpose in the first place and, as the Board's Manual says, will make "all methods and forms of missionary service contribute to the realization of this aim." I shall refer later to your rejection of this statement of the missionary aim but I would refer here, though I shall refer again also to this, to your statement that the use in these questions of the terms "Saviour", "Lord" and "Master" is "studiedly vague." That statement is both untrue and unjust. It is the kind of statement regarding your Christian brethren which both the Scriptures and the Standards of our Church forbid. I use the term "Saviour" and "Lord" and "Master", and my associates use them

and they are used by the Board in these questions in the same sense, in the full sense, in the sincere and explicit sense in which they are used in the Gospels, in the Book of Acts, in the Epistles and in the Revelation - in that sense and in no other. If you think that they are not adequate or that they are "studiedly vague" your controversy is with the New Testament whose meaning and authority in this and in all things I unreservedly accept and with whose very words I am content.

8. You refer to the fact that on May 8, 1928, "no less than six out of fourteen ministerial members of the National Board and five out of fifteen ministerial members of the Foreign Board "were signers of the 'Auburn Affirmation'", and that four of the five in the case of the Foreign Board are still members of the Board and that Mr. Madley, the present Candidate Secretary of the Board, was also a signer, though at the time he signed he had not become a secretary of the Board. If I were a minister I would not have signed the "Auburn Affirmation." Nor would I sign any other except the great affirmation of our Confession: "The Supreme Judge can be no other but the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture."

I have, however, just re-read the "Affirmation" and note the following positive declaration:

"We affirm and declare our acceptance of the Westminster Confession of Faith, as we did at our ordination, 'as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures.' We sincerely hold and earnestly preach the doctrines of evangelical Christianity, in agreement with the historic testimony of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, of which we are loyal ministers."

"We all hold most earnestly to these great facts and doctrines (i.e., the inspiration of the Bible, and the Incarnation, the Atonement, the Resurrection, and the Continuing Life and Supernatural Power of our Lord Jesus Christ); we all believe from our hearts that the writers of the Bible were inspired of God; that Jesus Christ was God manifest in the flesh; that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, and through Him we have our redemption; that having died for our sins He rose from the dead and is our everlasting Saviour; that in His earthly ministry He wrought many mighty works, and by His vacarious death and unending presence He is able to save to the uttermost."

In their positive affirmation surely these men are as much entitled to be trusted and believed as you and I think we are, and if I understand at all the positions and principles of Dr. Charles Hodge and Dr. Patton there is basis here for righteous Christian cooperation.

9. The second part of your paper is devoted to my "utterances" as a "cause of disquiet regarding the Foreign Board." And the terms of your letter and the expressed suspicions and implied charges of your statement are a summons to self-defense. I have been associated with the foreign mission work of our Church in our Board for thirty-eight years. I have tried to serve faithfully and efficiently and I do not think the service needs to be vindicated to men. There is a Master whom you and I are both trying to serve and His judgment is the only judgment which need much concern us, and you and I are both clearly known to Him. But one is glad of the opportunity to bear his Christian witness to our glorious Lord and His Gospel and to seek to relieve the foreign mission cause, to which long ago I gave my whole life from the suspicions and distrust which you think my utterances have brought upon it.

The chief ground of complaint and criticism in your statement with regard to me relates to the little book "Are Foreign Missions Done For?" and its statement of the aims of foreign missions. Inasmuch as this statement of aim is quoted in the book from the Board's Manual, where it has stood in its present form for many years, I am glad to retire for a time, with the little book, into the background and shall take up your attack on the statement of the missionary aim, to which also reference was earlier made. The statement which you criticize is as follows:

"The supreme and controlling aim of foreign missions is to make the Lord Jesus Christ known to all men as their Divine Saviour and to persuade them to become His disciples; to gather these disciples into Christian churches which shall be self-propagating, self-supporting, and self-governing; to cooperate, so long as necessary, with these churches in the evangelizing of their countrymen and in bringing to bear on all human life the spirit and principles of Christ."

You object to this as "evasive and vague" and because it does not explicitly "declare the absolute necessity for every missionary of belief in the virgin birth of our Lord, in His bodily resurrection, in His substitutionary death as a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice, in His supernatural return, in the absolute necessity of the new birth as ever against any development of human goodness, in justification by faith alone, in salvation by the sovereign grace of God."

In reply I would say: (1) This statement of the supreme and controlling aim of foreign missions was prepared in its present form by a committee of the Post War Conference of the Board with representatives of the Missions held at Princeton in June 1920. The Chairman of this committee was the Rev. J. Walter Lewis, B.D., of China, later secretary of the Bible Union of China. It was he who helped to form this statement, which the Conference unanimously adopted for just what it was intended to be, no more and no less. It was not a statement of the doctrinal content of the Gospel message. It was the briefest possible declaration of the central purpose of missions with due subordination of its various elements. That central purpose most assuredly is to make known our Lord Jesus Christ the Saviour of the world. (2) The statement is absolutely and faithfully Scriptural. It gathers together the words and thoughts of the Great Commission in its various forms: "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." "And He said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." "And ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

All your criticisms of the aim as stated are equally applicable, some of them more so, to the last commands of our Lord. These commands do not mention the things you require to have mentioned. They do not contain certain ideas which you disapprove. Your views explain away and even attack the clear meaning and the very words of the Great Commission as Matthew records it.

(3) You summarize your criticism of the statement of aim by saying "In short, there is no hint here that the foreign missionary has a message to mankind lost in sin, that that message is contained solely in the Bible as the word of God, and that the heart and core of the message is found in redemption by the

precious blood of Christ." I think that any fair and candid Christian mind will find not only a hint of these things but far more than a hint in the plain, honest words of the aim if honorably and fair mindedly construed. These and other elements of the Gospel would be included in a statement of the content of the message which the missionary is to make known, but they do not naturally or essentially fall in a sentence-statement of the central and controlling aim. That aim is to make our Saviour and Lord, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, known to the world. Paul writes to the Ephesians, "Unto me who am less than the least of all saints was this grace given to preach unto the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." Some of those riches he proceeds to unfold but by no means all, and he makes no mention of some of the particulars in which, of course, he believed but all of which he never attempted to summarize in any statement of his central, single missionary purpose.

I think you make three great mistakes here (1) You confuse the statement of the aim of missions to proclaim the Gospel of Christ with the statement of the content of the message of the Gospel. (2) You allow your suspicion and distrust of others, your judging as you would not be judged, to deflect and poison your view. When you call Jesus Christ "Lord and Master" you say the words are used honestly, but when I call Him so, the words are used dishonestly. This is "untrue and unjust." It is more than that. Paul says explicitly, "No man can say Jesus is Lord but in the Holy Spirit." You appear flatly to dispute Paul and to believe that men can call Jesus Lord by the evil spirit. Our Lord spoke some stern words about this kind of judgment. (3) You unmistakably imply that the failure specifically to mention certain great doctrines is evidence that those doctrines are not believed.

10. I will go on to deal specifically with this point. You say that "the vagueness which characterizes this utterance (i.e., the statement of aim) also characterizes the whole booklet (i.e., "Are Foreign Missions Done For?") There is in it no mention of the virgin birth of our Lord and of the absolute necessity of belief in it for every missionary, no mention of the bodily resurrection, no mention of the full truthfulness of Scripture (indeed no mention of Scripture as such at all) no mention of the supernatural return of Christ, no mention of the new birth of believers, no mention of justification by faith, no mention of the atoning death of Christ."

Before examining this statement and the implications which you put into it and the inferences which you draw out of it, I wish to make my position unmistakably clear. I am an evangelical Christian believer. I accept all the facts, all the doctrines, all the truths of the New Testament. I stated my convictions summarily in an article in the International Review of Missions, October 1923, on "Missionary Cooperation in Face of Doctrinal Difference", as follows:

"Before attempting to answer these questions, the writer of this paper ought perhaps, in order to avoid all misunderstanding, to state his own point of view. He accepts the whole of Christianity as set forth in the New Testament. He believes unqualifiedly every article of the Apostles' Creed. No language is adequate to state his conception of Christ. He believes that He is more and greater than any words can ever express, 'the Word made flesh,' God incarnate, reconciling the world to Himself, the only Saviour, our Lord and our God. He believes in the truthfulness of the record of Christ's life, including His miracles, and rejoices with great joy in the miracle of the Virgin Birth and of the real Resurrection of Christ and of His future personal advent. He believes

that it is God alone who through Christ saves men, not by their characters, nor by any work of righteousness which they can do, but by his own grace through the death and life of His dear son. As to the Bible, he accepts the doctrine of the Westminster Confession and regards its authority as supreme, not in faith only but also in the practice, conduct and relations of men. I am afraid this may seem to many very antiquated and unmodern, and the writer must be prepared to accept whatever limitations of value in the modern mind such views set upon his judgment as to the doctrinal limits of tolerance and the doctrinal basis of cooperation."

As to our Lord, I spoke fully and definitely in the Moderator's sermon at the General Assembly in 1929. I am no theologian and I did not and cannot speak in terms of systematized theology (which I respect and believe to be necessary) but I believe in the Saviour and His glory and His redeeming work as deeply and truly and lovingly as you can believe in Him. I tried to say this at the Assembly in Tulsa. These were some of the words I used:

"There is nothing good or great that we will not say about Jesus. There is no claim that we will not make for Him. There is naught that we can say about God that we will not say also about Jesus, 'the Son of His love; in whom we have our redemption, the forgiveness of our sins: who is the image of the invisible God, the first born of all creation; for in Him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through Him, and unto Him; and He is above all things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body the Church; who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things He might have the preeminence. For it was the good pleasure of the Father that in Him should all the fulness dwell; and through Him to reconcile all things unto Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things upon the earth, or things in the heavens.'

"We will say about Jesus all that all the creeds have said and then we will say that He is more than this. All that men have said or even can say about His glory, His beauty, His power, His deity we will say. He is all this and He transcends all this. Here let us stand each for himself and all of us as Christ's Church and henceforth let no man trouble us for we bear in our mind and in our heart, in our spirit and in our body the marks of the Lord Jesus.".....

"But all words fall short of the reality with regard to Christ. If He were nothing but a good dead man who spoke and wrought as wisely as He knew long ago in Palestine, who died bravely on a Cross with no hate of those who did such hateful wrong, and over whose undisturbed grave the Syrian stars look down, then we should have much scruple lest we should wrong His memory with excess speech. Indeed long ago

we should have found the adequate words to describe His humanity. But to us Jesus Christ is not a good dead man but God, the living God, our risen and living Saviour, and we will use all the language we have and deem it simple and poor to utter the wonder that is beyond all utterance.

"Nevertheless we can make our confession. We confess Him in the august symbols of our historic creeds and confessions."

You may not call these "vague and evasive" words. You may not call them, as you do call the sincere and earnest utterances of our missionaries and of the secretaries of our Board, "perfunctory lip service." If you do, you will have to answer before our Lord and Judge; may you will receive even now in your mind and character God's inevitable penalty upon such un-Christian and un-Christlike judgment of a man on his fellow Christians. Let us both be mindful of our Master's words. (Matt. VII. 1-4).

Now let us examine this present criticism. (1) You say that my little book does not mention the Virgin Birth and its place in Christian faith. That is true. Neither is it mentioned in your book on "The Origin of Paul's Religion." You there set forth the details of Jesus' life which were known to Paul but you make no mention among them of the Virgin Birth. The single mention of it in your book "What is Faith?" is in the question which is asked in a purely incidental and secondary way, "what has it (i.e., simple trust like that of the Centurion) to do with a question of fact like the question of the virgin birth?" (p. 91). You go on on this same page to state what we need to know about Jesus. You do not mention the Virgin Birth. These two books are serious and competent theological studies. One might expect to find clear mention in them, especially in a discussion of "What is Faith?" of all that the writer deemed essential. You omit the Virgin Birth in these studies of the content of Paul's Gospel and of the Christian faith and then condemn my poor little booklet on our foreign mission duty because I do not mention a truth which I had no occasion to mention here but which I joyfully believe and have set forth elsewhere at greater length and particularity than I have seen or heard of in any writings of yours.

And are you prepared to condemn every book that does not set forth the Virgin Birth of our Lord and of absolute necessity of belief in it for all Christian preachers and teachers? Dr. Patton has written a noble book on "Fundamental Christianity." Surely he will deal with the Virgin Birth here as you require. Does he? Not once does he mention it, save incidentally in the mention of the Virgin Mary and the Roman doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. In Dr. A. A. Hodge's "Popular Lectures on Theological Themes" there is, if I am not mistaken, a single reference to the Virgin Mary and not a word about the theological significance of the Virgin Birth. Even in the three great volumes of Charles Hodge's "Systematic Theology" the index does not mention "Virgin Birth". It refers only to Roman ideas of the Virgin Mary. And in the text the fact and the doctrine of the Virgin Birth receive

almost no attention. Under "Particular Passages which teach the Divinity of Christ" no reference is made to the Virgin Birth. Under the Person of Christ there are a few references to it, chiefly relating to the human nature in Jesus and the substance of His body. There is no reference whatever to the place of the Virgin Birth in the Christian message nor any such treatment of its theological significance as one finds, for example, in Du Bose's "Soteriology of the New Testament."

Do not misunderstand me. I believe in the Virgin Birth and I regard it, in Dr. George Alexander's words, as "a peculiarly precious truth." And I know that of course Dr. Patton believes it. But the idea that failure to mention it implies disbelief and that every book which omits it is unevangelical is untrue and irrational. Consider the result of the application of your requirements here to the volume entitled "Biblical and Theological Studies by the Faculty of Princeton of the Founding of the Seminary" (1912). It is a great volume of 634 pages. Here, surely, one would feel that he had a right to expect a full statement of the Gospel which the Seminary was established to teach, a presentation of the essential and fundamental teaching of Christianity, setting forth with special clearness the Christian message for our time. Dr. Patton in his opening paper says, "My theme embraces the entire circle of theological learning." Your criticism of our statement of aim is that it is not enough to speak of the circle; all the contents of the circle must be explicitly spoken of also, and you name certain contents whose verbal omission is proof of unevangelicalism and of a vague and evasive insincerity. Well, let us see. This huge and sincere theological volume contains not a single reference to the Virgin Birth. The one reference to the Second Coming of Christ is in a paper by Dr. Erdman. That is the only one. There is a paper on "Sin and Grace in the Koran" but none on "Sin and Grace in the Gospel." There is a "Study of Jonathan Edwards" and another of "The Aramaic of Daniel" and another of "The Shepherd of Hermas" but none of "the truthfulness of the Scriptures", of "the new birth of believers" of "justification by faith", of "the atoning death of Christ." What if one should use your own words: "What sort of a Gospel is it from which all that makes a Gospel has thus been left out? In this vague message the offence of the Cross is done away but so is the glory and the power." These words might far more justly be used here than with regard to my little missionary book. This is a great theological presentation of the Gospel offered in commemoration of a century's life of a great school whose business it is to set forth the content of the Gospel. But I will not use your words. I think the volume is a worthy Christian production and one of the best things in it is the passage in your paper, where, more adequately than any where else, you recognize (p. 875) the Pauline doctrine of the Resurrection. And I think its omissions are justified on the ground on which you justify omissions in Paul's Epistles, namely, "it is omitted not because it is unimportant but on the contrary because it is fundamental" (p. 862). I think that is a valid justification of these "Biblical and Theological Studies" with their vast omissions. I think it is valid in the case of many omissions in your books. Will you not be equally fair-minded toward others?

(2) You say there is "no mention of the bodily resurrection" in my little book. The Resurrection is mentioned more than once and by that I



mean the bodily Resurrection of our Lord, but I did not use the phrase. Neither have you used it in a single one of your three books which I have read. And it is not used in the New Testament? The New Testament is content to speak of the Resurrection, meaning the real and actual Resurrection of our Lord and I am content with the language of the New Testament. And as to the reality of the bodily Resurrection of our Lord I hold with Paul that it is the supreme fact and truth in Christianity.

(3) You say there is "no mention of the full truthfulness of Scripture (indeed no mention of Scripture, as such, at all)." Again you are mistaken. The Bible, the New Testament, the Word of God are all mentioned repeatedly. The full truthfulness of Scripture is everywhere assumed. I accept joyfully, and we expect each missionary to accept, the doctrine of our Standards with regard to the Scriptures. But I must honestly say that there is something which appears to be not altogether candid, I will not say "evasive", in your own references to the inspiration of the Scriptures. One notes the care with which you refrain from facing certain issues and from using the language of some of those whom you allow to think that you agree with them. And do you or do you not agree with Dr. Patton's position in "Fundamental Christianity"?

(4) You say there is "no mention of the supernatural return of Christ". Two of your three books make no mention of it. I find no mention of it in A.A. Hodge's "Popular Lectures." As for me I have cherished this faith and hope for forty-two years. My boyhood ministers, one a graduate of Princeton Seminary and all the orthodox of the orthodox, spiritualized this truth completely out of the Bible but I learned it at the Northfield Conference when I was a Sophomore in college and I have lived with it and in it ever since and have gladly borne some reproach because of it. I wrote a little book on it and have again and again preached it. I think I have borne ten times the witness to it which you have borne. But it did not seem to me to be necessary to introduce it into this little defence of missions. I was writing to defend foreign missions against their enemies. I did not realize that they would need to be defended from their friends.

(5) You say there is "no mention of the new birth of believers, and no mention of justification by faith, no mention of the atoning death of Christ." You qualify this by recognizing "one bare mention of the Crucified and ever-Living Lord." What would you think of the spirit of the statement that there was "one bare mention of the Virgin Birth" and "one bare mention of the revelation in "What is Faith?" But again you are mistaken. Those truths are either stated or implied or assumed in my booklet. More than this was not called for in the nature and purpose of the little book. It was not an attempt to set forth the content of the Christian message. It was simply a short and earnest presentation of the claim that Christ is the only and the sufficient Saviour.

11. The claims of Christ are not kept in the background. The little book is full of their assertion. It maintains, throughout, the sole sufficiency and universality of the Gospel: "Christ needs nothing from any one. No other religious teacher has any contribution to make to Him. In Him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead. He is the final and sufficient revelation of God and the only Saviour and Redeemer of man. This is the New Testament representation. It is the solid and unalterable foundation of foreign missions. Foreign Missions are not a search for a new and better religion. They are not an attempt to find something that is not already in Christ. They are the effort of those who have heard of Christ to take what they have heard to the world in order

that all men together may learn more of Him." (p.36) It conceives Christ, as the Scriptures do, as "the unconscious Desire of the Nations, the one answer to all the problems of the soul of man, his one Saviour and his only hope. A fundamental conviction for our Church in the work at home and abroad is this conviction that it has in Christ the sufficient Gospel. The Church is not looking for a new and different Gospel. It has found the one and only Saviour." "The Christian faith is a truth and a treasure greater than any other that we possess. It is our duty to share it and to appeal to all men everywhere to take it as their own. It is theirs by the same title that makes it ours and there are depths in it which will only be found as we explore them together apprehending with all saints, as alone we can, the full dimensions of the love of God, and all attaining, as the only way in which any of us can attain, the unity of the faith and the stature of the fulness of Christ. The truth that we need to keep in view and that it is easy to forget is that Christ is greater than all our thoughts about Him and that as the whole world comes to know Him and to accept His Lordship new glories hitherto not seen in Him will appear. But these glories are in Christ. They are not in the religions or racial cultures of Asia. And the revelation of them will not come from those religions or cultures. It will come from Christ as the result of a larger belief by mankind in Him and a larger application of His grace and power to human life throughout the world. This is the lesson we need to remember. Our ideas about Christ may be true as far as they go, but they do not go far enough. We may not hold that they are complete. But Christ is complete. In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." (p.42). "Christ is absolute and final and He and His religion are to prevail absolutely and finally." "It is Christ that we Christians owe to all men here and throughout the world. If this position be regarded as narrow and fanatical, then we must accept such condemnation. Only we are sure that the same judgment must apply to the whole doctrine of the New Testament. The foreign missions enterprise recorded there rested upon precisely this view of the uniqueness and sufficiency of Christ. The early Church believed that there was none other name given among men whereby they must be saved. All men everywhere needed Christ and Christ was enough. Neither Greek, nor Roman, nor Semitic religion had any correction to make or any supplement to add to Him. And the modern foreign missions enterprise stands on the same ground. It is the endeavor to make Christ known to all mankind, that all mankind together may live in Him and find in Him more and greater treasures than any one race or any one soul can find alone. Each race and each soul for itself can find in Him all that it knows that it needs, but only mankind altogether will discern the full depths of human want and the infinite fulness of Christ's supply. He is adequate indeed to the full needs of each soul only because He is the whole world's sufficient Saviour:

'In Him is life provided  
For all mankind and me.'"

"I would rejoice to see the missionary enterprise brought in our day more clearly and loyally and uncompromisingly than ever to these fundamental ideas with which it began, and to see it disentangled, as far as we can disentangle it, from a great many of the compromising fellowships in which it finds itself, and released to do its pure, elementary, rational work down at the foundations of human life in relating man one by one to Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour." (p.102) "I grant that a man's judgment here will depend altogether on what his estimate is of Jesus Christ. If Jesus Christ means nothing to him, why, he will not see any necessity on the part of other men for knowing about him. But if Jesus Christ is all there is for us, if we know that He is all there is, then we cannot but recognize the inherent obligation in wealth like that to be shared with all who have not yet

come into its possession." (p.108). "The missionary enterprise is the proclamation of the One Name given under Heaven among men whereby we must be saved, and there is nothing in any non-Christian religion to be added to the glory of Christ or to the fulness of the revelation of Christ, howbeit we so imperfectly apprehend it still. Inside the Christian spirit burns the old resolution that glowed in St. Paul's heart to whom it would have been 'we', if he had not shared the Christ he knew. Would that we might get back again to the foreign missionary enterprise in the pure, naked spiritual reality of it, as Christ called that little group of men and women around Him at the first, who had no nations back of them, who were not going to speak for any race. They were just a little group of individuals whom Christ had redeemed and who knew their Redeemer, and He told them to go out and share what they had in Him with all the world. That is what the missionary enterprise has always been. That is what it is today - Christianity stripped of all accessories and secondary accoutrement, just Christ, Himself, to be offered to the whole world for which He died." (p.141).

These are only a few expressions from this little book. It is a poor little thing but it is not the vague and evasive and unevangelical thing you allege. And of the hundreds of evangelical men and women who have written or spoken about the book you are the only one of whom I have heard who condemns it. One of the warmest and most grateful of the letters of commendation is from an old friend, Dr. Albertus Pieters, of Holland, Michigan, as conservative in his theology as you or I can ever hope to be. There is enough evidence in sheaves of letters at hand that the little book has fortified evangelical conviction and confirmed true missionary devotion. I will not quote them - yet I will quote from several that you may know the feeling of some not one whit less zealous than you:

"I have just finished the reading of your book, so kindly sent to me, entitled 'Are Foreign Missions Done For?' It is now after twelve o'clock, P.M. I cannot express to you the joy I received in reading it. After having much of my former zeal for missions dampened by recent post graduate studies in the University of - and the coldness of the churches that I have tried to interest in a feeble way, I now rededicate myself anew to the task of missions and resolve to do my best to give and stimulate giving in the little church I am called to serve.

"I can fully appreciate the difference between 'The religion of the good dead man' and the 'Religion of a good living God.'"

.....

"On the day that your little book 'Are Foreign Missions Done For?' came to us, I read it and decided to write you at once in regard to a further distribution of it. I probably felt that you know your own business, but in the light of some college periodicals recently received I know my first impulse was right.

"I would like to have the whole thing, or perhaps only the chapter 'Christ is Enough' printed for large distribution among our college organizations."

.....

"The more I read this volume the more I am impressed with its value and importance, coming especially at this time. It is the ablest defense or justification of Foreign Missions that has yet been sent forth. It will be sure to strengthen those who are faltering and win over those who are hostile or who are lukewarm and indifferent. The great Head of the Church must have put it into your heart to write it and I am sure will use it in stirring the whole Church up to a renewed sense of its great responsibility in regard to the whole matter."

\* \* \* \* \*

"For quite a long time I have wanted to write to you. After reading your recent booklet, 'Are Foreign Missions Done For?' I cannot refrain from writing. I want to thank you with all my heart for the stand and the messages in that booklet. Fundamentally, while defending the foreign mission movement from modern criticisms, it is a call back to the original motive of foreign missions. I found myself in complete agreement with every page of the book."

\* \* \* \* \*

"I have just read 'Are Foreign Missions Done For?' at one sitting and I can't resist saying how wonderful it is. To my mind it is the most unanswerable argument I have ever seen. I do hope somebody is giving it wide circulation. There is too much loose talk going about, even among people who know better, about one religion completing or complementing another. You are right, Christianity needs no completion - it is complete - it needs discovery."

\* \* \* \* \*

"Reading this wonderful little book of yours I feel convinced that you still stand firm on the old reliable Faith once delivered unto the Saints."

\* \* \* \* \*

This last is from the "Church of the Lutheran Brethren." I am ashamed to have quoted these. I dare to use Paul's words: "I am become foolish; ye have compelled me."

12. There is much more in your statement which should be reviewed, but I have written quite enough and more than ought to have been required. I could answer some of your criticisms by quoting from your own books the statement of the very truths for which you condemn me. There are two things more of which I shall speak. (1) The first is this: I find myself in deep and thankful accord with almost all of your great convictions. I am full of admiration and gratitude for "The Origin of Paul's Religion" and agree with you in your emphasis on the historicity and supernaturalness of the facts of Christianity's beginning and the necessity of the great Christian doctrines undetachable from these facts, on the need of reasoned doctrinal statement and defense, on the great doctrines of sin and faith, on the Person of Christ, on miracles, on Christianity as a message as well as an experience and a life, and I might go on with the long list of all the evangelical convictions. Where I differ from you is at the

points where, as it seems to me, you differ from the Scriptures. Some great Scripture truths you ignore or qualify. You twist or interpret some passages out of their plain and obvious statement. You use non-Scriptural, even anti-Scriptural forms of thought and expression. When apparently contradictory ideas or statements are found in the New Testament you modify one or the other or both to fit your scheme of thought instead of accepting them both just as they are without qualification as parts of larger truth or life which comprehends both without any minimization. You do no justice to Paul's moral and social applications of the Gospel and you even indulge in a fling at some ministers who read the sixth chapter of Ephesians to their people. There are illustrations in your paper which we are considering. There you use some words in your statement of essential doctrine which are not found in the Scriptures at all. I can state my convictions wholly in the very words of the Scriptures. You use repeatedly the phrase "the gospel of the Cross". This phrase is not in the Scriptures. The New Testament knows "the Gospel", "the Gospel of Christ", "the Gospel of the Kingdom", "the Gospel of peace," "the Gospel of God", "the everlasting Gospel", but it nowhere uses the phrase "the Gospel of the Cross" and the use which you make of that phrase implies interpretations both of the idea of the "Gospel" and of the idea of the Cross which do not do justice to the full New Testament teaching. The Gospel is not the Gospel of the Cross only, not even of the Cross of Christ only. The Gospel is the Gospel of Christ which includes the Cross and what preceded the Cross and what followed the Cross. The same defect marks your use of the idea of "salvation only by the Cross," and your criticism of my reference to the "redeeming life" of Christ. Your view certainly does not do full justice to the Scriptures nor does it represent the true Scriptural proportion of truth. You say in "What is Faith?" "Christ touches our lives, according to the New Testament through the Cross." (p. 143 but compare Heb. II.18; IV.,15,16.) "The Cross of Christ is the special basis of Christian faith". (p.144-But compare I. Cor. XV. 17). "The Cross by which salvation was wrought." (your statement; But compare Rom. I.16,V.10). You do not and cannot too much exalt the Cross of Christ, but you can and you do fail to set it in its Scriptural place and relationship and you neglect to relate it adequately to the full truth of the New Testament. You do not give their full Scriptural place to the Incarnation prior to the Cross or to the Resurrection and many other aspects of the full truth of the Gospel. You justly emphasize the fact of the Resurrection and its evidential significance but you do not adequately set forth its relation to the redeeming work of Christ, its place in our salvation, or its practical and dynamic significance in the life of the believer as the New Testament sets forth all these aspects. You do indeed in brief references couple the Cross and the Resurrection in their relation to salvation. In "What is Faith?" you speak of "the Gospel of redemption through the Cross and resurrection of Christ" (p.p. 184,191). Also "The Origin of Paul's Religion," p. 167. In view of your criticism of my use once of the word "Spirit" with a small "s", one notes that you habitually write "Cross" and sometimes of late, though not earlier, Virgin Birth with a capital and the "resurrection" without it.) But you criticize my truly Scriptural reference to the "redeeming life" of Christ (Rom.VI.,1-11;VII,4;VIII,1-14).

The New Testament teaching is far richer and freer than your view appears to be. It teaches not that the Cross saves us or that we are saved by the Cross. It teaches that Christ saves us, and that He saves us by Himself, by His death and by His life. How rich is Paul's orientation and proportion of these truths! "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the Death of his Son, much more, being

reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." (Rom. V., 8-11). Let any one take his New Testament and read it through, marking every reference to the Cross and the death of Christ and every reference to the Resurrection and the life of Christ and compare the result with the proportions of these glorious facts and doctrines in your emphasis. "Christ died for our sins" you quote often and you cannot quote too often. But only occasionally do you add "according to the Scriptures" and still less frequently do you complete the quotation and add "And He hath been raised on the third day according to the Scriptures." Of course you believe this and rejoice in it, but you do not relate these truths as Paul does and you substitute the Cross which might have been without the Resurrection for the place of the Resurrection which included the Cross. The Cross without the Resurrection would not have saved us. Paul proceeds in this very chapter to declare in language which takes our breath away: "If Christ hath not been raised, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins" (I. Cor. XV. 17). And one might go on to speak of Peter's teaching of the relation of the Resurrection to regeneration and salvation. This full Gospel of the New Testament is the glorious Gospel. I do not share your view that it can only be preached offensively. The Cross is indeed to many a stumbling block. Paul and Peter both realized and declared this. Paul also said: "Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God. Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved. Be ye imitators of me, even as I am of Christ." "Giving no offence in anything, that the ministry be not blamed. But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, nor walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." There is clearly in Paul's view a vast difference between the preaching of the offence of the Cross and the offensive preaching of the Cross. The word for "offense" which Paul uses in Gal. V. 11 and I. Cor. 11., 23 and which Peter uses in I. Peter 11., 3 is the very same which Paul uses in Rom. XIV., 13 and XVI., 17, and which the Saviour uses in His dreadful warning in Luke XVII. 1, 2, and which in the American Standard Revised is translated in all these passages not "offence" or "offend", but "stumbling block" or "cause to stumble." It were well if we remembered these words in our Christian fellowship within and in our proclamation of Christ and His Gospel to those who are without: "Then said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe unto him, through whom they come! It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones." "Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way." I know that in the parallel passage in Matthew the words "little ones" are followed by the words "that believe in Me," but surely the Spirit of Christ would not have us think that the Tender Shepherd of His little ones, who left the ninety and nine safe sheep in the fold to hunt the one that was lost, would be pleased with the thought that His disciples should measure their fidelity by their success in "offending", in "causing to stumble" the feet that out of the way.

And a great deal more might be said of the failure of your book to set forth "the full Scripture doctrine of the grace of God," to use your own phrase. But I do not suspect or reproach you as heretical or unevangelical. I believe that God and the Gospel and its grace are supernatural and infinite and if they are, while we may know them surely and truly, we may know, as Paul

himself says, only in part. But we are Christ's true disciples none the less, and we ought to love one another and walk together "comforted each of us by the other's faith", and making up each of us what is lacking in the other.

Perhaps you will be tempted to dismiss what I have just been saying as the simple, unsophisticated talk of one who is unschooled in theological systematization and no scholar in the field of theological controversy. It is even so. I do not pretend to be anything but a simple, Bible-Christian who holds that under the grand liberty of our Confession he is free to believe all that he finds in the Scriptures as he finds it there and to reject whatever he sees which contradicts or deflects or malforms the rich and varied truth of the Scriptures. If anything that I say here or elsewhere is at variance with the Scriptures, if it declares what the Scriptures do not truly declare, or fails to declare what the Scriptures do truly declare, I shall be glad to have it shown and shall rejoicingly leave any error for the truth. Is this not evangelical?

(2) And now lastly, you say "What is the real impact of our Foreign Board upon the world? Is it the preaching of Christ crucified - not in some pale modern sense but as a thing upon which new light is shed by the death of soldiers in the war, but as a blessed mystery revealed in the Word of God? If it is, then we can support that Board?" I do not like the slurring reference to the light which the sacrifice of life by men may help us to see in the divine fulness of the meaning of the death of Christ. But your question can be answered with an answer absolutely flat and clear. I ask you to read Dr. George Alexander's sermon at the Conference of the Board and the Missions in 1910 on "The Gospel of Paul." There the Gospel is described which the Board exists to spread abroad. The Foreign Board exists and its missionaries are appointed and maintained for one supreme purpose, namely, to proclaim to the world the Gospel of Jesus Christ, Incarnate, Crucified, Risen, Alive for Evermore, the Sinless One, the only Saviour, "who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who only hath immortality, dwelling in light unapproachable; whom <sup>no</sup> man hath seen nor can see; to whom be honor and power eternal. Amen."

I said at the outset that I would speak finally of your paper as a whole. Perhaps, however, it is hardly necessary to do this except to say that the particular items of evidence which you have presented as justifying your negative answer to the query "Can Evangelical Christians support our Foreign Board?" appear to me to be inadequate and, as I have sought to show, so unfounded, that one wonders how a just and brotherly Christian view could have rested upon them so grave an inquiry and so grave a proposal as the establishment of a rival foreign missionary agency in our Church, independent of the General Assembly and supported by members of our Church who proclaim their fellow members to be unevangelical. And you rest this inquiry and this proposal on unwarranted impressions regarding a few questions on the "Reference Blank", a few thoroughly sensible and right letters from Mr. Hadley in explanation, a criticism of a Scriptural statement of our missionary aim, a few random and detached quotations from things that I have written, a mass of your own suspicions, and arguments from silences which your own books would not bear. My utterances which you have quoted here, I believe, both

true and Scriptural but you might have quoted, if you had willed or known, a great mass of statements in addresses and books which you could not misuse as you have misused those in your paper. A man like you, devoted to scholarship, could not give his time to reading such simple books as mine, but they are loyal books, and their teaching has sought to be faithful to our Divine Lord and His Word.

The paper, as a whole, is as "untrue and unjust" as it is in detail. It is not worthy of you or of the Gospel or of the fellowship of the Gospel. And I do earnestly trust that what I have said in this letter will lead you to lay it aside, to dismiss your distrust and to join generously and faithfully in our great task of carrying to the non-Christian people the Gospel of Christ, "the full Scripture doctrine of the grace of God." And look at the real work before us here at home - in ignorance and unbelief, in slackness of moral and social standards, in sin and infidelity, in imperfection and unworthiness of faith and life in the Church, in the need of men everywhere for Christ. Contend for the faith within the Church but with equal zeal proclaim it to those who are without.

And now one more quotation from what you have written, not in this present statement of yours with its proposal of division and schism in our Church and its work, but in the closing paragraph of your book "Christianity and Liberalism."

"Is there no refuge from strife? Is there no place of refreshing where a man can prepare for the battle of life? Is there no place where two or three can gather in Jesus' name, to forget for the moment all those things that divide nation from nation and race from race, to forget human pride, to forget the passion of war, to forget the puzzling problems of industrial strife, and to unite in overflowing gratitude at the foot of the Cross? If there be such a place, then that is the house of God and that the gate of heaven. And from under the threshold of that house will go forth a river that will revive the weary world."

Yes, this is the place. But once again we cannot stop at the Cross. Beyond that there was an empty tomb and a Risen and Living Lord. "United with Him in the likeness of His Death", shall we not also be united with Him and therefore with one another "in the likeness of His Resurrection." Can we not, my friend, put away all this bitterness and railing and suspicion and be kind and tender-hearted and trustful? And can we not be spared the shame and waste of such a baseless controversy as a controversy like this between you and me would be and give ourselves and all our strength to better and truer things? Is not Paul's counsel, "walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time," doubly applicable to our relationship and our work within the company of us who truly love and wish truly to serve our Common Lord?

If what I have written does not avail to persuade you and if you still think that it is your duty to publish your paper, surely it is only fair and right that my answer should be published with it. In that case I am prepared to meet my proportionate share of the expense. But, my dear friend, there is a more excellent way.

Very faithfully yours,



C O P Y

April 30, 1929

Professor J. Gresham Machen, D.D.  
Box A., Princeton  
New Jersey.

My dear Dr. Machen:

I have already acknowledged the receipt of your letter of April 12th, 1929, with your accompanying paper entitled "Can Evangelical Christians Support our Foreign Board?" which you asked me to examine and criticize in order that if it contained anything "untrue or unjust" you might correct it. You courteously added that you would be grateful for any assistance that I might render to this end. I am very glad to respond and to try to help you to an affirmative answer to the question in your paper. I believe that my own Christian convictions are not less evangelical than yours, and I believe that our foreign missionary work and workers are also truly evangelical. If I were not convinced of both of these things I should not be associated with our Foreign Board or with the Presbyterian Church. And I use the word evangelical, as will appear, in its plain and honest sense of fidelity to the full Scriptural warrant and content of the Gospel.

I will try first to indicate particular points in your paper which appear to me to be "untrue or unjust" and then I shall speak of the paper as a whole.

1. Your contrast and implied antagonism between the "humanitarian service" of the Board and "propagating the Gospel of Jesus Christ as it is contained in the whole word of God" appears to me to be unjust and untrue and unscriptural. It is of course possible to divide the first from the second but not the second from the first. The Gospel includes human service. The Testament is full of that principle. It insists on such service as one of the evidences and fruits of fidelity to the Gospel. Furthermore, it is by the expression of the Gospel in deeds as well as in words that the Gospel was preached and is ever to be preached. Indeed, in many languages there were no words which had the significance of the English or Greek words embodying the truth of the Gospel and in these languages old words had to be taken and given a new content by life, as the Incarnation and its interpretation did at the beginning. It is true that our Board is carrying on a great body of human service and any one who is desirous of doing such work can not find any better opportunity for it than here, but our Board has always made it perfectly clear that in our policy all philanthropic work is tributary to and associated with the primary aim of evangelization. I have expressed my own convictions on this point again and again. One quotation from "Missionary Principles and Practice" (1902) will suffice: "In all use of philanthropic effort, such as medical missions, relief work, etc., as a method of mission work, the dominant and determining aim must

be evangelistic. Such work is useful as securing friendship, removing prejudice, representing the helpful, unselfish spirit of Christianity, contributing to the preaching of Christ, and the revelation of Him as Saviour and Lord, the source of all life and hope, and as relieving suffering; but it is not the responsibility of the foreign missionary enterprise to care for the sickness and suffering of the world. Times of critical need may occur, as in great famine and pestilence, when a broad liberty of action must be recognized; but in general, the aim of our philanthropic work should be to contribute directly to the preaching of the Gospel, the establishment of the Christian Church, and to the fostering of that Christian spirit which will provide, through the native Church which is growing up and through the people themselves, the salutary fruits of Christianity in philanthropic and humanitarian effort. As a missionary method, philanthropic work should ordinarily be limited, therefore, by the possibility of its evangelistic utilization and influence. A small development of such work contributing powerfully in the direction indicated is better than a large development of but feeble or indirect evangelistic influence." I think it is an error in your paper and in all your books that you do not adequately recognize and set forth the full doctrine of the Scriptures, namely, that the Gospel is to be preached not by word only but also and not less, or less fundamentally, by deeds of love and mercy. And thus preached by word and deed by our Presbyterian Church's Missions true fruitage has followed. Converts have been won and churches have been established as numerous and of as true New Testament character as have resulted from the work of any other missions. You are invited to make any comparison you please, including the undenominational Missions which you have sometimes praised for what you regarded as their superior doctrinal fidelity.

2. It is not for me to presume to defend the General Assembly and the Church at large against your expressions of distrust or your intimations that the Church and the Assembly are not really evangelical. I believe that our Church is evangelical. I wish with you that it were better instructed in the doctrine and more animated by the spirit of the Gospel, but I believe that it is officially and really a truly evangelical Church and I believe, too, that the Foreign Board has not lost its confidence. There are, of course, individuals, like yourself, who feel and express distrust, but I believe you and they are mistaken in this and that the Church is warmly and evangelically loyal both to the Gospel and to the Board and the cause which it represents.

Perhaps I should say a word regarding the footnote referring to the General Assembly in 1927 when, against my reluctance and protest, I was made Moderator. As to my action in connection with Judicial Case No. 1, I erred in unwittingly failing to note and to prevent the voting of members of the New York Synod on either side of the question, to the extent to which any of them did vote. These were not, however, the only votes illegally cast. And there were other and graver errors antecedent to these for which I was not responsible and which I could not prevent. For the good and honor of the Church it is better to pass them over, but if this matter is to be brought forward the whole story should be unflinchingly told. I candidly summarized the situation at the meeting of the Assembly the following morning, and the Assembly unanimously sustained my position.

I note your depreciation of the worth of an endorsement of the Foreign Board by the General Assembly but perhaps you would think more kindly of the resolutions of the Assembly at Grand Rapids in 1924 adopted on recommendation of the Standing Committee on Foreign Missions, of which Dr. MacLennan was

Chairman and Dr. Robert Dick Wilson was a member, with regard to union and cooperative enterprises, the selection of missionary candidates, the use of schools and hospitals, and the proclamation of the Gospel which, however, the Committee did not feel bound to describe and define. These were four of the resolutions:

"That while maintaining loyally the policy established by past General Assemblies in repeated enactments with regard to cooperation with other Evangelical bodies in our Foreign Missionary Work the Board be directed to exercise due care with regard to the Evangelical character of all such union and cooperative enterprise, and if there should arise in the work of these enterprises a situation in which teachings unsound or injurious to the Evangelical Faith are given, the Board, as it has declared to be its policy, should either secure the correction of such a situation or failing such withdraw from further participation.

"That the Board be commended for its care in the selection and appointment of candidates for the Foreign Field, and that they be requested to continue to exercise the most scrupulous care in this regard.

"That we rejoice in all the courage in which in home and Church, in hospital and school, by word and by the printed page, Christ has been preached to men, and we assure the Missionaries and native churches of our hope and prayer that the program of simple and direct Evangelism may be so increased that the Gospel may be carried to all the people for whose evangelization we are responsible.

"That in this hour when the world's need of Christ is so manifest and desperate, when the opportunities are so great, and new doors of entrance are opened into lands like Afghanistan, which have been hitherto closed, when young men and women are offering themselves freely for service, when our Missionaries and Churches with which they are uniting are eager for a great advance, when the problems of men and of nations and of races cry out, consciously or unconsciously, for Christ as their only solution, when the experience of the past year has revealed anew to the Church the adequate resources which are available to faith and love through the grace of God, this Assembly here and now dedicates itself and calls upon the Church to consecrate herself afresh to a new obedience to the last command of our Glorified Lord and to a full acceptance of His leadership in the supreme task of making the Gospel known to all mankind and of establishing His Kingdom over all the world."

3. You describe the impression which you say is made upon the minds of Princeton Seminary students by their conferences with representatives of our Foreign Board. The two representatives of our Board with whom the students have most contact are members of the faculty of Princeton Seminary and the full evangelical loyalty of their personal convictions has, I think, not been questioned. It has on the other hand been vouched for repeatedly by the Board of Directors and is trusted throughout the Church. As to the Candidate Department of the Board the best evidence of its attitude is in its acts. It has not recommended the declination or discouragement of a single Princeton Seminary student because of doctrinal convictions. The only specific case which you cite, of the young man recently who had been working in the Continuing Presbyterian Church in Canada, met with no discouragement whatever. He was a most desirable candidate, and was at once and joyfully appointed.

The men wanted for foreign missions are men who firmly believe and who

know and have experienced the Gospel of the New Testament, and who are able and ready to go out to preach by word and life "the glorious Gospel of the blessed God" in the fullness of its New Testament meaning. So far from discouraging such men, the Board is eagerly seeking for them. And when they are found they are counselled to stand fast in the Scriptural faith and to go forth to proclaim the message of the Gospel in all their life and work and teaching. You say there is no clear evidence of this. On the other hand I think there is clear evidence in the instructions given in the annual conference with new missionaries and otherwise. For a single example I refer you to Dr. George Alexander's sermon at the Post War Conference of the Board and all the Missions, entitled, "The Gospel of Paul."

4. You say that your impression of misgiving and distrust is strengthened by the blank which is sent to those whose names the candidate for missionary appointment gives as references, and you single out for criticism from the fifth item of character and equipment which are mentioned these three - "tolerance of the point of view of others," "desire to progress in spiritual truth," and "sanity", explained as "absence of tendency to extreme views." Surely you cannot mean to imply that these are undesirable qualities in Christian missionaries. There are, to be sure, limits to tolerance, just as to some other virtues, and it is not always easy to fix those limits. In your book on "The Origin of Paul's Religion" you carry as a scholar with great urbanity, the limits of tolerance of the point of view of others far beyond the point where anyone would dream of carrying them in cooperation with missionary service, but there would be nothing but pure separate individualism, as you have recognized in your books, if we were not prepared to work together within the evangelical fellowship in tolerance of the point of view of others. The question of the blank, as Mr. Hadley pointed out to you, covers simply that. And this Charles Hodge defended and advocated at the meeting of the Evangelical Alliance in New York in 1873 and Dr. Patton has nobly set forth in "Fundamental Christianity" and Dr. E. D. Warfield has emphasized in his Minority Report to the General Assembly of 1923 when, referring to our troubles at Princeton Seminary, he says, "In my judgment the root and ground of the difficulties are embodied in personalities, and so far as they are not embodied in personalities, they are embodied in the lack of that tolerance which we so strongly claim for ourselves and so generally deny to other." The question on the reference blank involves no more and nothing different from this - the ability of Christian men who hold the evangelical convictions of our Church to work together in harmony and good will and mutual tolerance.

And as to "desire to progress in spiritual truth" - that is one of the clearest admonitions of the New Testament: "Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." "Long for the spiritual milk which is without guile that ye may grow thereby unto salvation." "To walk worthily of the Lord unto all pleasing, bearing fruit in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God." and how many more passages. It is men and women who long and strive for the fulfilment of these possibilities in their own lives who are wanted in Christian service at home and abroad.

And "sanity" meaning "absence of tendency to extreme views." Certainly the opposite of these qualities is not desirable. So carefully in your books do you guard against certain extreme views regarding the millennial hope, regarding mysticism, regarding extreme intellectualism and extreme experimentalism, and many others! And how earnestly Paul counsels men: "Let your moderation, your forbearance be known unto all men." "God gave us a spirit of power and love and of a sound mind." "Soberness" is one of his emphasized virtues and Peter's, too. "Be ye therefore sober and watch unto prayer." "Therefore girding up the loins

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of your mind, be sober and set your hope perfectly on the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." This is true sanity, the sanity desired in missionaries. (Cf. Gal. V. 23, II Peter I.6.)

And note the place of these questions and their relationship to other questions in the blank. "Tolerance of the point of view of others" is part of the eighth general subject. "teamwork qualities." Four are mentioned, as follows: "a. Tact. b. Tolerance of the point of view of others. c. Self-control. d. Flexibility. (Subordination when best of one's own ambitions and preferences.)" The tenth subject of inquiry is "Spiritual Qualities" and the subheads are: "a. Christian character. b. Vital religious experience. c. Spiritual influence on others." The eleventh subject is "Promise of Development in the Christian Life" and the subheads are: "a. Desire to progress in spiritual truth. b. Eagerness for Christian service. c. Sanity. (Absence of tendency to extreme views)." Then follow questions as to the experience of the candidate in various forms of practical work and Christian service.

To twist these simple and reasonable and wise questions and to freight them with suspicion is an untrue and unjust note in your paper.

5. You say that in the "Candidate Reference Blank" "there is not one word to determine the candidate's intellectual attainments as over against his intellectual capacity; there is not one word to determine his knowledge of the contents of the Gospel." That is covered (1) by the constitutional requirements of the Church with regard to the examinations of ordained candidates by their Presbyteries which are reported to the Board. (Frequent actions of the General Assembly have dealt with this matter of the functions of Mission Boards and Presbyteries in this regard. The question as respects the Foreign Board was passed upon by the Board and by the General Assembly in 1902 when Dr. J. M. Paxton and Dr. Robert Russell Booth and Dr. John Fox, who were then members of the Board, were particularly concerned in the decisions reached, and in 1898, 1910 and 1921. (2) By the three questions to which most space is given and which are deemed the most important questions on the "Candidate Reference Blank", namely, "Would you recommend appointment?" "If not, what would seem to be the weak points or faults which in your judgment should disqualify the applicant from foreign mission work?" "Unhampere<sup>d</sup> by any questions, please state frankly your own opinion as to the general fitness of the candidate for the work of a foreign missionary?" (3) By the inclusion in the Personal Application Blank filled out by every layman and woman candidate of the four Constitutional questions propounded by Presbyteries to candidates for ordination. (4) By the following questions: "What is your habit in devotional Bible study and prayer?" "Do you believe that in every form of mission work the paramount duty of every missionary is to make Jesus Christ known as Saviour, Lord and Master?" "Is it your purpose to make this the chief aim of your missionary service, no matter what special duties may be assigned to you?"

(5) By requiring from every candidate, ordained and unordained, a separate letter. The requirement is thus expressed on all application blanks:

"WRITE A SEPARATE LETTER giving in brief: (a) a sketch of your life; (b) Your Christian development and experience; (c) Your motives in seeking missionary appointment; (d) The content of your Christian Message."

As explaining what is involved the following statement is sent to every candidate

who is not under care and examination of a Presbytery:

"The Content of your Christian Message.

This question is vital. You propose to go to a foreign land in order to propagate the Christian religion, either by public address, or by personal contacts, or by both. It is of utmost importance that you should have a clear idea of what this religion is. Any positive statements upon Christian faith and practice which you wish to make should be set forth here, and will naturally include your idea of God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, the redemptive work of Christianity, duties to your fellowmen, the Bible, the Church, together with such other leading truths as you would expect to embody in your message. Such condensation is desired as may be consistent with a satisfactory setting forth of your views."

Possibly you may never have seen this last statement. It has been in use for the past six years.

In the light of these statements I think your criticism of the blanks is untrue and unjust.

6. You criticize also the question on the application blank with regard to the ability of the candidate to "Cheerfully accept and support the decision of a majority, even if the decision is contrary to your (his) own opinion," and you are dissatisfied with Dr. Hadley's explanation that this does not refer to theological convictions but to capacity to work with others happily in attending to our main common business and in pursuing our definite and united aim even though there may be differences of opinion over questions of method and policy and judgment, and other things too. Such ability to work with others is certainly important. In the Shantung Mission in China there were three strong personalities - Dr. Nevius, Dr. Mateer and Dr. Corbett. These men were wide apart in their opinions as to missionary policy and method, but they were able to adjust themselves and to establish and carry forward one of the best missions of our Church. Mr. Hadley was right in interpreting this question in this sense, as raising not the issue of evangelical theological views, which are the expected basis of missionary appointment, but "the question of temperament and ability to work in fullest harmony with people in the small group which is usually found in a mission station."

The question on the application blank is an old, old question. It has been used for many years; in its present form for the past seven years. It has never had any reference to theological views. They are covered, as I have pointed out, in other ways.

7. You criticize also the two questions which emphasize the "paramount duty" and "the chief aim" of each missionary "to make Jesus Christ known as Saviour, Lord and Master." Surely this is just what the Church wants to be assured of in its foreign missionaries, that everyone of them will set the spiritual, evangelistic purpose in the first place and, as the Board's Manual says, will make "all methods and forms of missionary service contribute to the realization of this aim." I shall refer later to your rejection of this statement of the missionary aim but I would refer here, though I shall refer again also to this, to your statement that the use in these questions of the terms "Saviour", "Lord" and "Master" is "studiedly vague." That statement is both untrue and unjust. It is the kind of statement regarding your Christian brethren which both the Scriptures and the Standards of our Church forbid. I use the term "Saviour" and "Lord" and "Master", and my associates use them

and they are used by the Board in these questions in the same sense, in the full sense, in the sincere and explicit sense in which they are used in the Gospels, in the Book of Acts, in the Epistles and in the Revelation - in that sense and in no other. If you think that they are not adequate or that they are "studiedly vague" your controversy is with the New Testament whose meaning and authority in this and in all things I unreservedly accept and with whose very words I am content.

8. You refer to the fact that on May 8, 1928, "no less than six out of fourteen ministerial members of the National Board and five out of fifteen ministerial members of the foreign Board "were signers of the 'Auburn Affirmation', and that four of the five in the case of the Foreign Board are still members of the Board and that Mr. Hadley, the present Candidate Secretary of the Board, was also a signer, though at the time he signed he had not become a secretary of the Board. If I were a minister I would not have signed the "Auburn Affirmation". Nor would I sign any other except the great affirmation of our Confession: "The Supreme Judge can be no other but the Holy Spirit speaking in the scriptures."

I have, however, just re-read the "Affirmation" and note the following positive declaration:

"We affirm and declare our acceptance of the Westminster Confession of Faith, as we did at our ordination, 'as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures.' We sincerely hold and earnestly preach the doctrines of evangelical Christianity, in agreement with the historic testimony of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, of which we are loyal ministers.....

"We all hold most earnestly to those great facts and doctrines (i.e. the inspiration of the Bible, and the Incarnation, the Atonement, the Resurrection, and the Continuing Life and Supernatural Power of our Lord Jesus Christ); we all believe from our hearts that the writers of the Bible were inspired of God; that Jesus Christ was God manifest in the flesh; that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, and through Him we have our redemption; that having died for our sins He rose from the dead and is our everlasting Saviour; that in his earthly ministry He wrought many mighty works, and by His vicarious death and unfailling presence He is able to save to the Uttermost."

In their positive affirmation surely these men are as much entitled to be trusted and believed as you and I think we are, and if I understand at all the positions and principles of Dr. Charles Hodge and Dr. Patton there is basis here for righteous Christian cooperation.

9. The second part of your paper is devoted to my "utterances" as a "cause of disquiet regarding the Foreign Board." And the terms of your letter and the expressed suspicions and implied charges of your statement are a summons to self-defense. I have been associated with the foreign mission work of our Church in our Board for thirty-eight years. I have tried to serve faithfully and efficiently and I do not think the service needs to be vindicated to men. There is a Master whom you and I are both trying to serve and His judgment is the only judgment which need much concern us, and you and I are both clearly known to Him. But one is glad of the opportunity to bear His Christian witness to our Glorious Lord and His Gospel and to seek to relieve the foreign mission cause, to which long ago I gave my whole life from the suspicions and distrust which you think my utterances have brought upon it.

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The chief ground of complaint and criticism in your statement with regard to me relates to the little book "Are Foreign Missions Done For?" and its statement of the aims of foreign missions. Inasmuch as this statement of aim is quoted in the book from the Board's Manual, where it has stood in its present form for many years, I am glad to retire for a time, with the little book, into the background and shall take up your attack on the statement of the Missionary aim, to which also reference was earlier made. The statement which you criticize is as follows:

"The supreme and controlling aim of foreign missions is to make the Lord Jesus Christ known to all men as their Divine Saviour and to persuade them to become His disciples; to gather these disciples into Christian churches which shall be self-propagating, self-supporting and self-governing; to cooperate, so long as necessary, with these churches in the evangelizing of their countrymen and in bringing to bear on all human life the spirit and principles of Christ."

You object to this as "evasive and vague" and because it does not explicitly "declare the absolute necessity for every missionary of belief in the virgin birth of our Lord, in His bodily resurrection, in His substitutionary death as a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice, in His supernatural return, in the absolute necessity of the new birth as over against any development of human goodness, in justification by faith alone, in salvation by the sovereign grace of God."

In reply I would say: (1) This statement of the supreme and controlling aim of foreign missions was prepared in its present form by a committee of the Post War Conference of the Board with representatives of the Missions held at Princeton in June 1920. The chairman of this committee was the Rev. J. Walter Lowrie, D.D., of China, later secretary of the Bible Union of China. It was he who helped to form this statement, which the Conference unanimously adopted for just what it was intended to be, no more and no less. It was not a statement of the doctrinal content of the Gospel message. It was the briefest possible declaration of the central purpose of missions with due subordination of its various elements. That central purpose most assuredly is to make known our Lord Jesus Christ the Saviour of the world. (2) The statement is absolutely and faithfully Scriptural. It gathers together the words and thoughts of the Great Commission in its various forms: "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." "And He said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." "And ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

All your criticisms of the aim as stated are equally applicable, some of them more so, to the last commands of our Lord. These commands do not mention the things you require to have mentioned. They do contain certain ideas which you disapprove. Your views explain away and even attack the clear meaning and the very words of the great Commission as Matthew records it.

(3) You summarize your criticism of the statement of aim by saying "In short, there is no hint here that the foreign missionary has a message to mankind lost in sin, that that message is contained solely in the Bible as the word of God, and that the heart and core of the message is found in redemption by the



precious blood of Christ." I think that any fair and candid Christian mind will find not only a hint of these things but far more than a hint in the plain, honest words of the aim if honorably and fairly minded construed. These and other elements of the Gospel would be included in a statement of the content of the message which the missionary is to make known, but they do not naturally or essentially fall in a sentence-statement of the central and controlling aim. That aim is to make our Saviour and Lord, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, known to the world. Paul writes to the Ephesians, "Unto me who am less than the least of all saints was this grace given to preach unto the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." Some of those riches he proceeds to unfold but by no means all, and he makes no mention of some of the particulars in which, of course, he believed but all of which he never attempted to summarize in any statement of his central, single missionary purpose.

I think you make three great mistakes here, (1) You confuse the statement of the aim of missions to proclaim the Gospel of Christ with the statement of the content of the message of the Gospel. (2) You allow your suspicion and distrust of others, your judging as you would not be judged, to deflect and poison your view. When you call Jesus Christ "Lord and Master" you say the words are used honestly, but when I call Him so, the words are used dishonestly. This is "untrue and unjust." It is more than that. Paul says explicitly, "No man can say Jesus is Lord but in the Holy Spirit." You appear flatly to dispute Paul and to believe that men can call Jesus Lord by the evil spirit. Our Lord spoke some stern words about this kind of judgment. (3) You unmistakably imply that the failure specifically to mention certain great doctrines is evidence that those doctrines are not believed.

10. I will go on to deal specifically with this point. You say that "the vagueness which characterizes this utterance (i.e., the statement of aim) also characterizes the whole booklet, (i.e., "Are Foreign Missions Done For?") There is in it no mention of the virgin birth of our Lord and of the absolute necessity of belief in it for every missionary, no mention of the bodily resurrection, no mention of the full truthfulness of Scripture (indeed, no mention of Scripture as such at all) no mention of the supernatural return of Christ, no mention of the new birth of believers, no mention of justification by faith, no mention of the atoning death of Christ."

Before examining this statement and the implications which you put into it and the inferences which you draw out of it, I wish to make my position unmistakably clear. I am an evangelical Christian believer. I accept all the facts, all the doctrines, all the truths of the New Testament. I stated my convictions summarily in an article in the International Review of Missions, October 1923, on "Missionary Cooperation in Face of Doctrinal Difference", as follows:

"Before attempting to answer these questions, the writer of this paper ought perhaps, in order to avoid all misunderstanding, to state his own point of view. He accepts the whole of Christianity as set forth in the New Testament. He believes unqualifiedly every article of the Apostles' Creed. No language is adequate to state his conception of Christ. He believes that He is more and greater than any words can ever express, 'the Word made flesh,' God incarnate, reconciling the world to Himself, the only Saviour our Lord and our God. He believes in the truthfulness of the record of Christ's life, including His miracles, and rejoices with great joy in the miracle of the Virgin Birth and of the real Resurrection of Christ and of His future

personal advent. He believes that it is God alone who through Christ saves men, not by their characters, nor by any works of righteousness which they can do, but by His own grace through the death and life of His dear Son. As to the Bible, he accepts the doctrine of the Westminster Confession and regards its authority as supreme, not in faith only but also in the practice, conduct and religions of men. I am afraid this may seem to many very antiquated and unmodern, and the writer must be prepared to accept whatever limitations of value in the modern mind such views set upon his judgment as to the doctrinal limits of tolerance and the doctrinal basis of cooperation."

As to our Lord, I spoke fully and definitely in the Moderator's sermon at the General Assembly in 1928. I am no theologian and I did not and cannot speak in terms of systematized theology (which I respect and believe to be necessary) but I believe in the Saviour and His glory and His redeeming work as deeply and truly and lovingly as you can believe in Him. I tried to say this at the Assembly in Tulsa. These were some of the words I used:

"There is nothing good or great that we will not say about Jesus. There is no claim that we will not make for Him. There is naught that we can say about God that we will not say also about Jesus, 'the Son of His love; in whom we have our redemption, the forgiveness of our sins: who is the image of the invisible God, the first born of all creation; for in Him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through Him, and unto Him; and He is above all things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the Church; who is the beginning, the first born from the dead; that in all things He might have the preeminence. For it was the good pleasure of the Father that in Him should all the fulness dwell; and through Him to reconcile all things unto Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things upon the earth, or things in the heavens.'

"We will say about Jesus all that all the creeds have said and then we will say that He is more than this. All that men have said or even can say about His glory, His beauty, His power, His deity we will say. He is all this and He transcends all this. Here let us stand each for himself and all of us as Christ's Church and henceforth let no man trouble us for we bear in our mind and in our heart, in our spirit and in our body the marks of Lord Jesus.".....

"But all words fall short of the reality with regard to Christ. If He were nothing but a good dead man who spoke and wrought as wisely as He knew long ago in Palestine, who died bravely on a cross with no hate of those who did such hateful wrong, and over whose undisturbed grave the Syrian stars look down, then we should have much scruple lest we should wrong His memory with excess speech. Indeed long ago we should have found the adequate words to describe His humanity. But to us Jesus Christ is not a good dead man but God, the living God, our Risen and Living Saviour, and we will use all the language we have and deem it simple and poor to utter the wonder that is beyond all utterance.

"Nevertheless we can make our confession. We confess Him in the august symbols of our historic creeds and confessions."

You may not call these vague and evasive" words. You may not call them, as you do call the sincere and earnest utterances of our missionaries and of the secretaries of our Board, "perfunctory lip service." If you do, you will have to answer before our Lord and Judge; nay you will receive even now in your mind and character God's inevitable penalty upon such un-Christian and UnChristlike judgment of a man on his fellow Christians. Let us both be mindful of our Master's words. (Matt. VII. 1-4).

Now let us examine this present criticism. (1) You say that my little book does not mention the Virgin Birth and its place in Christian faith. That is true. Neither is it mentioned in your book on "The Origin of Paul's Religion." You there set forth the details of Jesus' life which were known to Paul but you make no mention among them of the Virgin Birth. The single mention of it in your book "What is Faith?" is in the question which is asked in a purely incidental and secondary way, "What has it (i.e. simple trust like that of the Centurion) to do with a question of fact like the question of the Virgin Birth?" (p.91). You go on on this same page to state what we need to know about Jesus. You do not mention the Virgin Birth. These two books are serious and competent theological studies. One might expect to find clear mention in them, especially in a discussion of "What is Faith?" of all that the writer deemed essential. You omit the Virgin Birth in these studies of the content of Paul's Gospel and of the Christian faith and then condemn my poor little booklet on our foreign mission duty because I do not mention a truth which I had no occasion to mention here but which I joyfully believe and have set forth elsewhere at greater length and particularity than I have seen or heard of in any writings of yours.

And are you prepared to condemn every book that does not set forth the Virgin Birth of our Lord and of absolute necessity of belief in it for all Christian preachers and teachers? Dr. Patton has written a noble book on "Fundamental Christianity." Surely he will deal with the Virgin Birth here as you require. Does he? Not once does he mention it save incidentally in the

mention of the Virgin Mary and the Roman doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. In Dr. A. A. Hodge's "Popular Lectures on Theological Themes" there is, if I am not mistaken, a single reference to the Virgin Mary and not a word about the theological significance of the Virgin Birth. Even in the three great volumes of Charles Hodge's "Systematic Theology" the index does not mention "Virgin Birth." It refers only to Roman ideas of the Virgin Mary. And in the text the fact and the doctrine of the Virgin Birth receive almost no attention. Under "Particular Passages which teach the Divinity of Christ" no reference is made to the Virgin Birth. Under the Person of Christ there are a few references to it, chiefly relating to the human nature in Jesus and the substance of His body. There is no reference whatever to the place of the Virgin Birth in the Christian message nor any such treatment of its theological significance as one finds, for example, in Du Bose's "Soteriology of the New Testament."

Do not misunderstand me. I believe in the Virgin Birth and I regard it, in Dr. George Alexander's words, as "a peculiarly precious truth." And I know that of course Dr. Patton believes it. But the idea that failure to mention it implies disbelief and that every book which omits it is unevangelical, is untrue and irrational. Consider the result of the application of your requirements here to the volume entitled "Biblical and Theological Studies by the Faculty of Princeton of the Founding of the Seminary" (1912). It is a great volume of 634 pages. Here, surely, one would feel that he had a right to expect a full statement of the Gospel which the Seminary was established to teach, a presentation of the essential and fundamental teaching of Christianity, setting forth with special clearness the Christian message for our time. Dr. Patton in his opening paper says, "my theme embraces the entire circle of theological learning." Your criticism of our statement of aim is that it is not enough to speak of the circle: all the contents of the circle must be explicitly spoken of also, and you name certain contents whose verbal omission is proof of unevangelicalism and of a vague and evasive insincerity. Well, let us see. This huge and sincere theological volume contains not a single reference to the Virgin Birth. The one reference to the second coming of Christ is in a paper by Dr. Erdman. That is the only one. There is a paper on "Sin and Grace in the Koran" but none on "Sin and Grace in the Gospel." There is a "Study of Jonathan Edwards" and another of "The Aramaic of Daniel" and another of "The Shepherd of Hermas" but none of "the truthfulness of the Scriptures", of "the new birth of believers" of "justification by faith", of "the atoning death of Christ." What if one should use your own words: "what sort of a Gospel is it from which all that makes a Gospel has thus been left out? In this vague message the offense of the Cross is done away but so is the glory and the power." Those words might far more justly be used here than with regard to my little missionary book. This is a great theological presentation of the Gospel offered in commemoration of a century's life of a great school

whose business it is to set forth the content of the Gospel. But I will not use your words. I think the volume is a worthy Christian production and one of the best things in it is the passage in your paper, where, more adequately than any where else, you recognize (p.57b) the Pauline doctrine of the Resurrection. And I think its omissions are justified on the ground on which you justify omissions in Paul's Epistles, namely, "It is omitted not because it is unimportant but on the contrary because it is fundamental;" (p.562). I think that is a valid justification of these "Biblical and Theological Studies" with their vast omissions. I think it is valid in the case of many omissions in your books. Will you not be equally fair-minded toward others?

(2) You say there is "no mention of the bodily resurrection" in my little book. The Resurrection is mentioned more than once and by that I mean the bodily Resurrection of our Lord, but I did not use the phrase. Neither have you used it in a single one of your three books which I have read. And it is not used in the New Testament. The New Testament is content to speak of the Resurrection, meaning the real and actual Resurrection of our Lord and I am content with the language of the New Testament. And as to the reality of the bodily Resurrection of our Lord I hold with Paul that it is the supreme fact and truth in Christianity.

(3) You say there is "no mention of the full truthfulness of Scripture, (indeed no mention of Scripture, as such, at all)." Again you are mistaken. The Bible, the New Testament, the Word of God, are all mentioned repeatedly. The full truthfulness of Scripture is everywhere assumed. I accept joyfully, and we expect each missionary to accept, the doctrine of our Standards with regard to the Scriptures. But I must honestly say that there is something which appears to be not altogether candid, I will not say "evasive", in your own references to the inspiration of the Scriptures. One notes the care with which you refrain from facing certain issues and from using the language of some of those whom you allow to think that you agree with them. And do you or do you not agree with Dr. Patton's position in "Fundamental Christianity"?

(4) You say there is "no mention of the supernatural return of Christ". Two of your three books make no mention of it. I find no mention of it in A.A. Hodge's "Popular Lectures." As for me I have cherished this faith and hope for forty-two years. My boyhood ministers, one a graduate of Princeton Seminary and all the orthodox of the orthodox, spiritualized this truth completely out of the Bible but I learned it at the Northfield Conference when I was a Sophomore in college and I have lived with it and in it ever since and have gladly borne some reproach because of it. I wrote a little book on it and have again and again preached it. I think I have borne ten times the witness to it which you have borne. But it did not seem to me to be necessary to introduce it into this little defense of missions. I was writing to defend foreign missions against their enemies. I did not realize that they would need to be defended from their friends.

(5) You say there is "no mention of the new birth of believers, and no mention of justification by faith, no mention of the atoning death of Christ." You qualify this by recognizing "one bare mention of the Crucified and ever-living Lord." What would you think of the spirit of the statement that there was "one bare mention of the Virgin Birth" and "one bare mention of revelation" in "What is Faith?" But again you are mistaken. Those truths are either stated or implied or assumed in my booklet. More than this was not called for in the nature and purpose of the little book. It

was not an attempt to set forth the content of the Christian message. It was simply a short and earnest presentation of the claim that Christ is the only and the Sufficient Saviour.

II. The claims of Christ are not kept in the background. The little book is full of their assertion. It maintains, throughout, the sole sufficiency and universality of the Gospel: "Christ needs nothing from any one. No other religious teacher has any contribution to make to Him. In Him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead. He is the final and sufficient revelation of God and the only Saviour and Redeemer of man. This is the New Testament representation. It is the solid and unalterable foundation of foreign missions. Foreign missions are not a search for a new and better religion. They are not an attempt to find something that is not already in Christ. They are the effort of those who have heard of Christ to take what they have heard to the whole world in order that all men together may learn more of him." (p.36). It conceives Christ, as the scriptures do, as "the unconscious Desire of the Nations, the one answer to all the problems of the soul of man, his one Saviour and his only hope. A fundamental conviction for our Church in the work at home and abroad is this conviction that it has in Christ the sufficient Gospel. The Church is not looking for a new and different Gospel. It has found the one and only Saviour." "The Christian faith is a truth and a treasure greater than any other that we possess. It is our duty to share it and to appeal to all men everywhere to take it as their own. It is theirs by the same title that makes it ours and there are depths in it which will only be found as we explore them together apprehending with all saints, as alone we can, the full dimensions of the love of God, and all attaining, as the only way in which any of us can attain, the unity of the faith and the stature of the fulness of Christ. The truth that we need to keep in view and that it is easy to forget, is that Christ is greater than all our thoughts about Him and that as the whole world comes to know Him and to accept His Lordship new glories hitherto not seen in Him will appear. But these glories are in Christ. They are not in the religions or racial cultures of Asia. And the revelation of them will not come from those religions or cultures. It will come from Christ as the result of a larger belief by mankind in Him and a larger application of His grace and power to human life throughout the world. This is the lesson we need to remember. Our ideas about Christ may be true as far as they go, but they do not go far enough. We may not hold that they are complete. But Christ is complete. In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." (p.42). "Christ is absolute and final and He and His religion are to prevail absolutely and finally". "It is Christ that we Christians owe to all men here and throughout the world. If this position be regarded as narrow and fanatical, then we must accept such condemnation. Only we are sure that the same judgment must apply to the whole doctrine of the New Testament. The foreign missions enterprise recorded there rested upon precisely this view of the uniqueness and sufficiency of Christ. The early Church believed that there was none other name given among men whereby they must be saved. All men everywhere needed Christ and Christ was enough. Neither Greek, nor Roman, nor Semitic religion had any correction to make or any supplement to add to Him. And the modern foreign missions enterprise stands on the same ground. It is the endeavor to make Christ known to all mankind, that all mankind together may live in Him and find in Him more and greater treasures than any one race or any one soul can find alone. Each race and each soul for itself can find in Him all that it knows that it needs, but only mankind altogether will discern the full depths of human want and the infinite fulness of Christ's supply. He is adequate indeed to the full needs of each soul only because He is the whole world's sufficient Saviour:

'In Him is life provided  
For all mankind and me.'

"I would rejoice to see the missionary enterprise brought in our day more clearly and loyally and uncompromisingly than ever to those fundamental ideas with which it began, and to see it disentangled, as far as we can disentangle it, from a great many of the compromising fellowships in which it finds itself, and released to do its pure, elementary, rational work down at the foundations of human life in relating men one by one to Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour." (p. 102) "I grant that a man's judgment here will depend altogether on what his estimate is of Jesus Christ. If Jesus Christ means nothing to him, why, he will not see any necessity on the part of other men for knowing about Him. But if Jesus Christ is all there is for us, if we know that He is all there is, then we cannot but recognize the inherent obligation in wealth like that to be shared with all who have not yet come into its possession." (p. 108) "The missionary enterprise is the proclamation of the One Name given under Heaven among men whereby we must be saved, and there is nothing in any non-Christian religion to be added to the glory of Christ or to the fulness of the revelation of Christ, howbeit we so imperfectly apprehend it still. Inside the Christian spirit burns the old resolution that glowed in St. Paul's heart to whom it would have been 'woe', if he had not shared the Christ he knew. Would that we might get back again to the foreign missionary enterprise in the pure, naked spiritual reality of it, as Christ called that little group of men and women around Him at the first, who had no nations back of them, who were not going to speak for any race. They were just a little group of individuals whom Christ had redeemed and who knew their Redeemer, and He told them to go out and share what they had in Him with all the world. That is what the missionary enterprise has always been. That is what it is today. - Christianity stripped of all accessories and secondary accoutrement, just Christ, Himself, to be offered to the whole world for which He died." (p. 141).

These are only a few expressions from this little book. It is a poor little thing but it is not the vague and evasive and unevangelical thing you allege. And of the hundreds of evangelical men and women who have written or spoken about the book you are the only one of whom I have heard who condemns it. One of the warmest and most grateful of the letters of commendation is from an old friend, Dr. Albertus Pieters, of Holland, Michigan, as conservative in his theology as you can ever hope to be. There is enough evidence in sheaves of letters at hand that the little book has fortified evangelical conviction and confirmed true missionary devotion. I will not quote them - yet I will quote from several that you may know the feeling of some not one whit less zealous than you:

"I have just finished the reading of your book, so kindly sent to me, entitled 'Are Foreign Missions Done For?' It is now after twelve o'clock p.m. I cannot express to you the joy I received in reading it. After having much of my former zeal for missions dampened by recent post graduate studies in the University of \_\_\_\_\_ and the coldness of the churches that I have tried to interest in a feeble way, I now rededicate myself anew to the task of missions and resolve to do my best to give and stimulate giving in the little church I am called to serve. "I can fully appreciate the difference between 'The religion of the good dead men' and the 'Religion of a good living God.'"

"On the day that your little book 'Are Foreign Missions Done For?' came to us, I read it and decided to write you at once in regard to a further distribution of it. I probably felt that you know your own business, but in the light of some college periodicals recently received I know my first impulse was right.

"I would like to have the whole thing, or perhaps only the chapter

'Christ is Enough' printed for large distribution among our college organizations."

"The more I read this volume the more I am impressed with its value and importance, coming especially at this time. It is the ablest defense or justification of foreign missions that has yet been sent forth. It will be sure to strengthen those who are faltering and win over those who are hostile or who are lukewarm and indifferent. The great head of the church must have put it into your heart to write it and I am sure will use it in stirring the whole Church up to a renewed sense of its great responsibility in regard to the whole matter."

"For quite a long time I have wanted to write to you. After reading your recent booklet, 'Are Foreign Missions Done For?' I cannot refrain from writing. I want to thank you with all my heart for the stand and the message in that booklet. Fundamentally, while defending the foreign mission movement from modern criticism, it is a call back to the original motive of foreign missions. I found myself in complete agreement with every page of the book."

"I have just read 'Are Foreign Missions Done For?' and I can't resist saying how wonderful it is. To my mind it is the most unanswerable argument I have ever seen. I do hope somebody is giving it wide circulation. There is so much loose talk going about, even among people who know better, about one religion completing or complementing another. You are right, Christianity needs no completion - it is complete - it needs discovery."

"Reading this wonderful little book of yours I feel convinced that you still stand firm on the old reliable faith once delivered unto the saints."

This last is from the Church of the Lutheran Brethren. I am ashamed to have quoted these. I dare to use Paul's words: "I am become foolish; ye have compelled me."

12. There is much more in your statement which should be reviewed, but I have written quite enough and more than ought to have been required. I could answer some of your criticisms by quoting from your own books the statement of the very truths for which you condemn me. There are two things more of which I shall speak. (1) The first is this: I find myself in deep and thankful accord with almost all of your great convictions. I am full of admiration and gratitude for "The Origin of Paul's Religion" and agree with you in your emphasis on the historicity and supernaturalness of the facts of Christianity's beginning and the necessity of the great Christian doctrines undetachable from these facts, on the need of reasoned doctrinal statement and defense, on the great doctrines of sin and faith, on the person of Christ, on miracles, on Christianity as a message as well as an experience and a life, and I might go on with a long list of all the evangelical convictions. Where I differ from you is at the points where, as it seems to me, you differ from the Scriptures. Some great Scripture truths you ignore or qualify. You twist or interpret some passages out of their plain and obvious statement. You use non-Scriptural, even



anti-Scriptural forms of thought and expression. When apparently contradictory ideas or statements are found in the New Testament you modify one or the other or both to fit your scheme of thought instead of accepting them both just as they are without qualification as parts of larger truth or life which comprehends them both without any minimization. You do no justice to Paul's moral and social applications of the Gospel and you even indulge in a fling at some ministers who read the sixth chapter of Ephesians to their people. There are illustrations in your paper which we are considering. There you use some words in your statement of essential doctrine which are not found in the Scriptures at all. I can state my convictions wholly in the very words of the Scriptures. You use repeatedly the phrase "the Gospel of the Cross". This phrase is not in the Scriptures. The New Testament knows "the Gospel", "the Gospel of Christ", "the Gospel of the Kingdom", "the Gospel of peace," "the Gospel of God," "the everlasting Gospel," but it nowhere uses the phrase "the Gospel of the Cross" and the use which you make of that phrase implies interpretations both of the idea of the "Gospel" and of the idea of the Cross which do not do justice to the full New Testament teaching. The Gospel is not the Gospel of the Cross only, not even of the Cross of Christ only. The Gospel is the Gospel of Christ which includes the Cross and what preceded the Cross and what followed the Cross. The same defect marks your use of the idea of "salvation only by the Cross," and your criticism of my reference to the "redeeming life" of Christ. Your view certainly does not do full justice to the Scriptures nor does it represent the true Scriptural proportion of truth. You say in "What is Faith?" "Christ touches our lives, according to the New Testament through the Cross." (p.143 But compare Heb. II,16; IV.,15,16) "The Cross of Christ is the special basis of Christian faith". (p.144- But compare I Cor. IV. 17). "The Cross by which salvation was wrought." (your statement; but compare Rom. 1.16,V.10). You do not and cannot too much exalt the Cross of Christ, but you can and you do fail to set it in its Scriptural place and relationship and you neglect to relate it adequately to the full truth of the New Testament. You do not give their full Scriptural place to the Incarnation prior to the Cross or to the Resurrection and many other aspects of the full truth of the Gospel. You justly emphasize the fact of the Resurrection and its evidential significance but you do not adequately set forth its relation to the redeeming work of Christ, its place in our salvation, or its practical and dynamic significance in the life of the believer as the New Testament sets forth all these aspects. You do indeed in brief references couple the Cross and the Resurrection in their relation to salvation. In "What is Faith?" you speak of "the Gospel of redemption through the Cross and resurrection of Christ" (p.p. 104,101). Also "The Origin of Paul's Religion," p.167. In view of your criticism of my use once of the word "spirit" with a small "s", one notes that you habitually write "Cross" and sometimes of late, though not earlier, Virgin Birth with a capital and "resurrection without it.) But you criticize my truly Scriptural reference to the "redeeming life" of Christ (Rom. VI., 1-11; VII:4; VIII:1-14).

The New Testament teaching is far richer and freer than your view appears to be. It teaches not that the Cross saves us or that we are saved by the Cross. It teaches that Christ saves us, and that He saves us by Himself, by His death and by His life. How rich is Paul's orientation and proportion of these truths! "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." (Rom. V., 8-II). Let any one take his New Testament and read it through,

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marking every reference to the Cross and the death of Christ and every reference to the Resurrection and the life of Christ and compare the result with the proportions of these glorious facts and doctrines in your emphasis. "Christ died for our sins" you quote often and you cannot quote too often. But only occasionally do you add "according to the Scriptures", and still less frequently do you complete the quotation and add "And He hath been raised on the third day according to the Scriptures." Of course you believe this and rejoice in it, but you do not relate these truths as Paul does and you substitute the Cross which might have been without the Resurrection for the place of the Resurrection which included the Cross. The Cross without the Resurrection would not have saved us, Paul proceeds in this very chapter to declare in language which takes our breath away: "If Christ hath not been raised, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins" (I. Cor. XV.17) And one might go on to speak of Peter's teaching of the relation of the Resurrection to regeneration and salvation. This full Gospel of the New Testament is the glorious Gospel. I do not share your view that it can only be preached offensively. The Cross is indeed to many a stumbling block. Paul and Peter both realized and declared this. Paul also said: "Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God. Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved. Be ye imitators of me, even as I am of Christ. Giving no offense in anything, that the ministry be not blamed. But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." There is clearly in Paul's view a vast difference between the preaching of the offense of the Cross and the offensive preaching of the Cross. The word for "offence" which Paul uses in Gal. V.11 and I. Cor. II.,23 and which Peter uses in I. Peter II.,8 is the very same which Paul uses in Rom. XIV.,13 and XVI.,17, and which the Saviour uses in His dreadful warning in Luke XVII.1,2, and which in the American Standard Revised is translated in all these passages not "offence" or "offend", but "stumbling block" or "cause to stumble." It were well if we remembered these words in our Christian fellowship within and in our proclamation of Christ and His Gospel to those who are without; "Then said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but that offences will come; but woe unto him, through whom they come! It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones." "Let us not therefore judge one another any more; but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way." I know that in the parallel passage in Matthew the words "little ones" are followed by the words "that believe in Me" but surely the Spirit of Christ would not have us think that the Tender Shepherd of His little ones, who left the ninety and nine safe sheep in the fold to hunt the one that was lost, would be pleased with the thought that His disciples should measure their fidelity by their success in "offending", in "causing to stumble" the feet that are out of the way.

And a great deal more might be said of the failure of your books to set forth "the full Scripture doctrine of the grace of God," to use your own phrase. But I do not suspect or reproach you as heretical or unevangelical. I believe that God and the Gospel and its grace are supernatural and infinite and if they are, while we may know them surely and truly, we may know, as Paul himself says, only in part. But we are Christ's true disciples none the less, and we ought to love one another and walk together "comforted each of us by the other's faith", and making up each of us what is lacking in the other.

Perhaps you will be tempted to dismiss what I have just been saying as the simple, unsophisticated talk of one who is unschooled in theological systematization and no scholar in the field of theological controversy. It is even so. I do not pretend to be anything but a simple, Bible Christian who holds that under the grand liberty of our Confession he is free to believe all that he finds in the Scriptures as he finds it there and to reject whatever he sees which contradicts or deflects or malforms the rich and varied truth of the Scriptures. If anything that I say here or elsewhere is at variance with the Scriptures, if it declares what the Scriptures do not truly declare, or fails to declare what the Scriptures do truly declare, I shall be glad to have it shown and shall rejoicingly leave any error for the truth. Is this not evangelical?

(2) And now lastly, you say "What is the real impact of our Foreign Board upon the world? Is it the preaching of Christ crucified - not in some pale modern sense, not as a thing upon which new light is shed by the death of soldiers in the war, but as a blessed mystery revealed in the Word of God? If it is, then we can support that Board?" I do not like the slurring reference to the light which the sacrifice of life by men may help us to see in the divine fulness of the meaning of the death of Christ. But your question can be answered with an answer absolutely flat and clear. I ask you to read Dr. George Alexander's sermon at the Conference of the Board and the Missions in 1910 on "The Gospel of Paul." There the Gospel is described which the Board exists to spread abroad. The Foreign Board exists and its missionaries are appointed and maintained for one supreme purpose, namely, to proclaim to the world the Gospel of Jesus Christ, Incarnate, Crucified, Risen, Alive for Evermore, the Sinless One, the only Saviour, "who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, who only hath immortality, dwelling in light unapproachable; whom no man hath seen nor can see; to whom be honor and power eternal. Amen."

I said at the outset that I would speak finally of your paper as a whole. Perhaps, however, it is hardly necessary to do this except to say that the particular items of evidence which you have presented as justifying your negative answer to the query "Can Evangelical Christians Support our Foreign Board?" appear to me to be inadequate and, as I have sought to show, so unfounded, that one wonders how a just and brotherly Christian view could have rested upon them so grave an inquiry and so grave a proposal as the establishment of a rival foreign missionary agency in our Church, independent of the General Assembly and supported by members of our Church who proclaim their fellow members to be unevangelical. And you rest this inquiry and this proposal on unwarranted impressions regarding a few questions on the "Reference Blank", a few thoroughly sensible and right letters from Mr. Hadley in explanation, a criticism of a Scriptural statement of our missionary aim, a few random and detached quotations from things that I have written, a mass of your own suspicions, and arguments from silences which your own books would not bear. My utterances which you have quoted are, I believe, both true and Scriptural but you might have quoted, if you had willed or known, a great mass of statements in addresses and books which you could not misuse as you have misused those in your paper. A man like you, devoted to scholarship, could not give his time to reading such simple books as mine, but they are loyal books, and their teaching has sought to be faithful to our Divine Lord and his Word.

The paper, as a whole, is as "Untrue and unjust" as it is in detail. It is not worthy of you or of the Gospel or of the fellowship or the Gospel. And I do earnestly trust that what I have said in this letter will lead you to lay it aside, to dismiss your distrust and to join generously and faithfully in our great task of carrying to the non-Christian people the Gospel of Christ, "the full Scripture doctrine of the grace of God." And look at the real work before us here at home - in ignorance and unbelief, in slackness of moral and social standards, in sin and infidelity, in imperfection and unworthiness of faith and life in the Church, in the need of men everywhere for Christ. Contend for the faith within the Church but with equal zeal proclaim it to those who are without.

And now one more quotation from what you have written, not in this present statement of yours with its proposal of division and schism in our Church and its work, but in the closing paragraph of your book "Christianity and Liberalism."

"Is there no refuge from strife? Is there no place of refreshing where a man can prepare for the battle of life? Is there no place where two or three can gather in Jesus' name, to forget for the moment all those things that divide nation from nation and race from race, to forget human pride, to forget the passions of war, to forget the puzzling problems of industrial strife, and to unite in overflowing gratitude at the foot of the Cross? If there be such a place, then that is the house of God and that the gate of heaven. And from under the threshold of that house will go forth a river that will revive the weary world."

Yes, this is the place. But once again we cannot stop at the Cross. Beyond that there was an empty tomb and a Risen and Living Lord. "United with Him in the likeness of His Death", shall we not also be united with Him and therefore with one another "in the likeness of His Resurrection." Can we not, my friend, put away all this bitterness and railing and suspicion and be kind and tender-hearted and trustful? And can we not be spared the shame and waste of such a baseless controversy as a controversy like this between you and me would be and give ourselves and all our strength to better and truer things. Is not Paul's counsel, "walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time," doubly applicable to our relationship and our work within the company of us who truly love and wish truly to serve our Common Lord?

If what I have written does not avail to persuade you and if you still think that it is your duty to publish your paper, surely it is only fair and right that my answer should be published with it. In that case I am prepared to meet my proportionate share of the expense. But, my dear friend, there is a more excellent way.

Very faithfully yours,

RMS/c/d







have not been questioned the longer at the New Testament, and we are only too ready to go on to ground of words and life. The Christian Gospel of the blessed Jesus is the foundation of the New Testament teaching. As for your disapproval, I am sure, the Church is equally anxious for them. And also they are ready that are accessible to stand fast in the scriptural faith and to go forth to proclaim the message of the Gospel in all their life and work and teaching. You may find in the clear evidence of this. On the other hand I think there is clear evidence in the instructions given in the annual conferences with our missionaries and churches. For a single example I refer you to Dr. George Alexander's address at the year the conference of the Board and all the resolutions, entitled, "The Gospel of Truth."

4. You say that your impression of evangelists and churches is strengthened by the plain which is read to those whose names are candidates for missionary participation gives as reference, and you might put the criticisms from the Fifth item of character and equipment which are mentioned in the third - "tolerance of the point of view of others," "desire to progress in spiritual truth," and "readiness to listen to honest and convincing testimony." Surely you cannot mean to imply that these are desiderata qualities in Christian evangelists. There are, to be sure, traits to tolerate, just as to some other virtues, and it is not always easy to fix these limits. In your address on "The Origin of Man's Religion" you carry, at a certain vigorous earnestness, the limits of tolerance of the point of view of others far beyond the point which would allow of carrying them in cooperation with missionary service, but there would be nothing but pure separatist individualism, as you have recognized in your words, if we were not prepared to work together within the evangelized fellowship in tolerance of the point of view of others. The question of the blood, as Dr. Henry points out to you, covers chiefly that. And this Christian body suffered and suffered at the meeting of the evangelized alliance in New York in 1870 and Dr. Nathan has never yet found in "Fundamental Christianity" and Dr. A. A. Andrews has emphasized in his glowing report to the General Assembly of 1888, referring to our position as witnesses to history, he says, "My judgment has been that the ground of the individualities are essential in generalities, and so far as they are not essential in generalities, they are essential in the least of that tolerance which we so strongly desire for ourselves and so humbly desire for others." The question of the tolerance then involves no more and nothing different from this - the willing of tolerance, and the bold the evangelized and united of our Church to work together to glorify God and man and extend the Kingdom.

And as to "desire to progress in spiritual truth" - that is one of the clearest evidences of the New Testament. "There is the power and knowledge of our work and saving grace through Christ." "They do the spiritual with which is without guile that we may grow knowing and obedient." "We will sacrifice of the heart with all cleaving, knowing that it is very good work, and acceptable in the presence of God." and so many more passages. It is not our power and law, and grace but the fulfillment of these possibilities in truth and love and our united in individual service of God and man.

and "readiness to listen to honest and convincing testimony." Certainly the opposite of these qualities is not desirable. And especially in your letter of the year past against certain persons whom regarding our fellowships here, regarding systems, regarding serious individualities and serious separations, and was strong. And you earnestly and honestly say "Let your conviction, your forbearance and love be such that all men." "Let your love be a shield of love and peace and of a sound mind." "Therefore" is one of the evangelized virtues and qualities. The 24 members have had added some groups. "Therefore" is one of the virtues of the Bible.



2. Questions asked.

4/2/58

of your aims, to carry out our year long service in the strictest sense of the word, and to the revelation of Jesus Christ." This is true faith, true faith, desired in disciples. (M. Gal. V. 22, 23 Peter 1.3.)

And note the place of these questions and their relationship to other questions in the blank. "Tolerance of the point of view of others" is part of the eighth general subject. "Teamwork qualities" four are mentioned, as follows: (a) Tact. b. tolerance of the point of view of others. c. subordination. d. flexibility. (subordination was part of one's own qualities and preferences.) The tenth subject of inquiry is "spiritual qualities" and the subheads are: a. Christian character. b. vital religious experience. c. spiritual influence on others." The eleventh subject is "degrees of development in the Christian life" and the subheads are: a. trials in progress in spiritual truth. b. progress for Christian service. c. unity. (absence of tendency to extreme views)." Then follow questions as to the acceptance of the candidate in various forms of practical work and Christian service.

To trust these simple and reasonable and wise questions and to find fault with suspicion is an untrue and unjust note to your paper.

3. You say that in the "Candidate Reference Sheet" "There is no mention of assessing the candidate's intellectual attainments as your against his intellectual capacity; there is not one word to determine his command of the contents of the Gospel." This is covered (1) by the constitutional requirements of the Church with regard to the examinations of ordained candidates by their presbytery. The rules are reported to the Board. (Recent articles of the General Assembly have dealt with this matter of the functions of Mission Societies and Synagogues in this regard. The motion of amendment by Mr. James Boyd was passed upon by the Board and by the General Assembly in 1952 when Dr. W. B. Weston and Dr. Robert Maxwell Booth and Dr. John Fox, who were then members of the Board, were particularly concerned in the decision reached, and in 1955, 1956 and 1957. (2) By the three questions to which best space is given and which are framed the best hope that questions of the "Candidate Reference Sheet", namely, "could you recommend appointment?" "If not, what would seem to be the main points or faults which in your judgment would disqualify the applicant from foreign field work?" "Assessed by any questions, please state frankly your own opinion as to the general fitness of the candidate for the work of a foreign missionary?" (3) By the inclusion in the various applications filed out by each presbytery of some certificate of the four constitutional questions posed by presbyteries to candidates for ordination. (4) In the following questions: "Does it give you a right impression of the candidate's general character?" "Do you believe that in every form of ministry work the paramount duty of every missionary is to make Jesus Christ known as Saviour, Lord and Master?" "Is it your purpose to make this the chief aim of your missionary service? In what other ways would you like to be utilized to you?"

(1) By requiring from every candidate, attached to the application, a certificate letter. The requirement is thus expressed in all constitutive documents:

"There is a minimum of three years in which: (a) a candidate should have (b) had Christian development and experience; (c) your active in seeking missionary appointment; (d) the content of your missionary service."

It is believed that it would be well to follow the procedure in such in every candidate

and is not under such an examination of a "bookstore".

The sort of your magazine readers.

This question is vital. You propose to go to a foreign land to attempt to propagate the Christian religion, either by public address, or by personal contacts, or by vote. It is of almost importance that you should have a clear idea of what this religion is. Any positive statement you make that is not positive which you wish to make would be set forth here, and will naturally indicate your idea of God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, the redemptive work of Christianity, duties to your fellowmen, and so on. The chance to other with such otherleading truth as you would expect to preach in your magazine. Such condensation is desired as can be submitted with a satisfactory resting faith of your views.

Usually you may never have seen this last statement. It had been in use for two past six years.

In the light of your statements, I am a great critic of the above in nature and subject.

4. The criticism also the question of the application about this report to the ability of the candidate to "carefully consider and express his conviction of a majority, even if the decision is contrary to your (his) own opinion," and you are disappointed that Mr. Hadley's application that this does not seem to be a satisfactory restriction but to capacity to care also to care heavily in attending to our main general interest and is pursuing our interests but which are your views may be different of opinion and questions of method and policy and judgment, and other things too. Your ability to care also to care is certainly important. In the existing situation in China there were two very strong personalities - Mr. Service, Mr. Carter and Mr. Barrett. These men were wide apart in their opinions as to religious policy and method, but they were able to adjust themselves and to establish and carry forward one of the best divisions of our church. Mr. Hadley was right in interpreting this question in this sense, as involving not the issue of fundamental theological views, which are the subject of much of missionary application, but the question of temperament and ability to work in fullest harmony with people in the field group which is usually found in a mission station.

The question of the application about to be said, all over the world. It has been used for many years; in its present form for the past seven years. It has never had any reference to theological views. They are covered, as I have pointed out, in other ways.

7. The criticism also the question which requires the "personal view" and "the mind view" of your missionary "to care about what he has to say, but not about." Usually this is just what the church needs to be assured of in the various circumstances, that wherever of them will not be satisfied, and that the purpose is not first place and, as the church's best hope, will have "the utmost care" of the missionary service throughout of the application of this act. I shall still refer to your objection in this statement of your application, and how I would refer now, though I shall never again come to this, to your statement that he was in these questions of the terms "other", "good" and "human" is "wholly false." This statement is both untrue and unjust. It is the kind of falsehood, especially your application by these years and the application of the members of the church. I am the best "teacher" and "good" and "human", and of application of the

and they are used in the same sense in the same sense, in the full sense, in the same and explicit sense in which they are used in the Bible, in the book of Acts, in the epistles and in the Revelation - in that sense and in no other. It goes without saying that they are not adequate in that they are "traditionally used" just summarily in with the same intention of the same meaning and authority in this and in all things I have previously said and will surely say again in the future.

3. The value of the fact that of May 3, 1955, the last time the roll of members of the National Board was published and the roll of members of the Foreign Board were published in the "Foreign Christian", was that four of the five in the case of the Foreign Board the still members of the Board and that Dr. Bailey, the present Chairman, Secretary of the Board, was also a member, though at the time he signed he was not known a member of the Board. If I were a witness I could not have signed the "Foreign Christian", but could I have had some sense of the great affirmation of our Christianities? The degree of value can be no great but the only spirit speaking in the Christianities.

I have, however, just received the "affirmation" and with the following greeting conclusions:

"The affirming and accepting and accepting of the testimony concerning us, as we sit at our table, 'we contain the whole of the truth taught in the Holy Scriptures.' We humbly and gratefully accept the testimony of evangelical Christianity, in agreement with the historic testimony of the Protestant Church in the British Isles of London, of which we are loyal members.....

"We will hold fast constantly to these great facts and principles of the Christianities of the Bible, and the Christianities, the Christianities, the Christianities, and the Christianities life and supernatural power of our Lord Jesus Christ; we will believe from the source that the witness of the Bible were English of God; that Jesus Christ was the Messiah of the Jews; that God was the Father, revealing the Father unto himself, and through Him to have the Christianities and having also the Father and the Son from the dead and in our Christianities before, that in His earthly ministry He brought many things which, and to the Christianities world and Christianities presence in His only Son to the Christianities."

In this, positive affirmations, surely, these two are as much entitled to be treated and believed as you and I think we are, and if I am certain of all the justifications and principles of the Christianities and Dr. Bailey there is surely some very righteous Christianities cooperation.

4. The second part of your letter is directed to my "testimony" of a "house of English Christianities the Foreign Board," and the words of your letter are the expressions suggested and explicit contents of your statement and a statement in self-reference. I have been associated with the Foreign Board since 1947 and since in our time for thirty-eight years. I have tried to serve faithfully and efficiently and I do not think the service could be so continued to you. There is a matter where you are I am sure trying to serve and the judgment in the only judgment which could have been made, and you and I are both strongly bound to Him. But one is glad of the opportunity to hear the Christianities witness to our Christianities and the English and to have the witness of the Foreign Board, to which I have been up since 1947 from the beginning and since then you think of Christianities were brought back to.





personal advent. We believe that it is to be effected through Christ's sacrifice, not by their character, nor by any works of righteousness which they can do, but by His own grace through the death and life of His dear Son. As to the Bible, he accepts the doctrine of the Westminster Confession and regards its authority as supreme, not in fact only but also in the practice, conduct and religions of men. I was afraid this may seem to many very antiquated and unmodern, and the writer must be prepared to accept whatever limitations of value in the modern mind such views put upon his judgment as to the doctrinal limits of tolerance and the doctrinal basis of cooperation.

As to our Lord, I spoke fully and definitely in the Moderator's sermon at the General Assembly in 1923. I am no theologian and I did not and cannot speak in terms of systematized theology (which I respect and believe to be necessary) but I believe in the Saviour and His glory and His redeeming work as deeply and truly and lovingly as you can believe in Him. I tried to say this at the Assembly in 1913. These were some of the words I used:

"There is nothing good or great that we will not say about Jesus. There is no claim that we will not make for Him. There is nothing that we can say about God that we will not say also about Jesus, 'the Son of His love; in whom we have our redemption, the forgiveness of our sins; who is the Image of the invisible God, the first born of all creation; for in Him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things were born created through Him, and unto Him; and He is above all things, and in Him all things consist. and He is the end of the world, the Church; who is the beginning, the first born from the dead; that in all things He might have the preeminence. For it was the good pleasure of the Father that in Him should all the fulness dwell; and that through Him to reconcile all things unto Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross through Him, I say, whether things upon the earth, or things in the heaven..'

"We will say about Jesus all that all the creeds have said and more we will say, what He is more than said. All that men have said or ever can say about His glory, His beauty, His power, His deity, we will say. He is all this and so transcendence all this. Therefore we stand each for himself and all of us as Christ's Church and membership let no man trouble us for we bear in our mind and in our heart, in our spirit and in our soul the name of Lord Jesus.".....



... of the Virgin Mary and the doctrine of the immediate  
 conception. In R. S. ... 's "Papacy ... theological ..."  
 is, if I am not mistaken, a single reference to the Virgin Mary and a short  
 about the theological significance of the Virgin Birth. Even in the three great  
 volumes of Charles ... 's "History of Theology" ... do not contain "Virgin  
 Birth." It refers only to "some ideas of the Virginity," and in the next few  
 fact ... the doctrine of the Virgin Birth ... is almost ...  
 "Particular passages which touch the divinity of Christ" ... reference to ...  
 the Virgin Birth. Under the person of Christ there are a few references to it,  
 chiefly relative to the human nature in Jesus and the ... of His body.  
 there is no reference whatever to the place of the Virgin Birth in the Christian  
 average nor any such treatment of its theological significance as the first, for  
 example, in ... 's "Cosmology of the ..."

Do not misinterpret me. I believe in the Virgin Birth  
 and I regard it, in Dr. ... 's words, as a "spiritually precious  
 truth." And I know that I ... believed it. ... the ...  
 that I ... to mention it ... disbelief ... every ... which ... it  
 is ... , is ... and irrational. ... the result of the ...  
 of your ... are ... the volume entitled "Biblical and Historical  
 Studies of the ... of ... of the ... of the ..." (1925).  
 it is a ... volume of ... . ... , ... , ... you ...  
 right to ... a ... statement in the ... which ...  
 to ... , a ... of the ... and ... of  
 Christianity, ... with ... the Christian ...  
 for our time. ... in his ... , ...  
 entire circle of ... . ... of ...  
 is that it is ... to ... of the ... of the ...  
 must be ... of ...  
 ... of ... / ...  
 ... , let us ... the ... of ...  
 ... reference to the Virgin Birth. ... reference to the ... of  
 Christ in ... . ... it ... .  
 paper on "The ... of ..."  
 ... . ... of ...  
 ... of ... of ... of ...  
 "the truthfulness of the ...", of "the ... of ..."  
 "justification by faith", ... of ...  
 of ... and ... . ... of a ... is it ...  
 all ... a ... has ... left out! ...  
 and ... of the ... is ... out ... is ... and the ...  
 these words ... for ... justice ... with ... to ...  
 little ... book. ... is a ... presentation of the  
 ... is ... of a ... 's life of a ...



to be certain it is to be sure that the content of the Gospel. But I will not use your words. I think the volume is a worthy justification presentation and one of the best books if it is the passage in your book, which, more importantly than any other, you emphasize (p. 10) the bodily resurrection of the resurrection. And I think its criticisms are justified in the ground in which you justify omissions in Paul's letters, namely, "It is not that you because it is unimportant but on the contrary because it is fundamental;" (p. 22). I think there is a real justification of these "biblical and theological studies" with your very omissions. (I think it is valid in the case of any omissions in your book. Will you not be equally fair-minded toward others?)

(2) You say there is "no mention of the bodily resurrection" in my little book. The resurrection is mentioned very often even not by that I mean the bodily resurrection of our Lord, but I did not use the phrase. Neither have you used it in a single one of your three books which I have read. And it is not found in the New Testament. The New Testament is expected to speak of the resurrection, meaning the real and actual resurrection of our Lord and I am content with the language of the New Testament. And as to the reality of the bodily resurrection of our Lord I hold with Paul that it is the certain fact and truth in Christianity.

(3) You say there is "no mention of the full truthfulness of Scripture" (indeed no mention of Scripture, as such, at all). Would you not distinguish the Bible, the New Testament, the word of God, and all mentioned separately. The full truthfulness of Scripture is everywhere assumed. I accept joyfully, and as a matter of course, the authority of our Standards etc. regard to the inspiration. But I must honestly say that there is something which appears to be not altogether sound, I think not so stated, in your introduction to the inspiration of the Scripture. You notice the care with which you refer in your book to certain instances and from which the language of some of mine does not allow to think that you agree with them. And do you or do you not agree with Dr. Luther's position in "Fundamental Christianity"?

(4) You say there is "no mention of the supernatural power of Scripture". None of your three books make no mention of it. I find no mention of it in Dr. Luther's "Christian Liberty". As far as I have noticed this faith was true for thirty-five years. It is not the miracle, but a promise of immediate assistance and aid and protection of the Holy Spirit, spiritualized the truth and truth of the Bible and I thought it at the heart of our church and I was a member in college and I have read your book and in it you have had your place, your own promise because of it. I think a little more so if you would again and again present it. I think I have done the time and effort to it which you have done. And it did not seem to me to be necessary to introduce it into your little volume of mine. I had nothing to defend myself against in it. I was not really sure you would need to be defended from their friends.

(5) You say there is "no mention of the power of Scripture" and no mention of justification, by faith, as mentioned in the opening words of Gal. 3. The justification of righteousness was there mentioned in the promised and ever-lasting love. And would you think of the spirit of the statement that there are those who mention of the Virgin Birth and that some mention of revelation in "What is Faith?" And would you not mention, your words are either stated or implied or assumed in my book. And that you will not think that in the nature and essence of the living word. It



"I would rejoice to see the missionary enterprise brought in our day more sincerely and loyally and unselfishly than ever to those fundamental ideas which make it basic, and to see it disentangled, as far as we can liberate it, from a gross mass of the compromising fellowships in which it takes lawful, but reluctant, refuge. The pure, elementary, rational and dogmatic foundations of human life is being laid out by men to Jesus Christ as their law andavior." (p. 104) "I trust that I don't judge here will regard altogether as that his attitude is of Jesus Christ. If Jesus Christ means nothing to him, why, we will not see and hear anything on the part of other men for knowing about it. And if Jesus Christ is all there is for us, it is know that he is all there is, that he reveals and prescribes the inherent obligation in health like that to be created in his will and that we get down into his power." (p. 105) "The situation of the man who is under heaven under the shadow of that is wrong, and there is nothing in any non-Christian religion to be added to the glory of Jesus Christ or as the witness of the revelation of Christ, taken it as we experimentally approach it still. Inside the Christian spirit burns the old revelation that glows in the soul's heart to show it shall have been 'seen', it is not yet created to the rest of the world. Would that we could get back again to the original Christianly inspired in the pure, naked spiritual quality of it, as Christ called that little group of men and women around him at the first, the kind of nakedness of that, the man not going to spend for any race. They were just a little group of individuals, some of them had children and was like their father, but it was like to be and had share what they were in the vision all one body. This is your own life, it is not surprise me always seen. This is what it is today. - Unfortunately streams of all conditions and conditions and conditions, just Christ, himself, is separated to the world world for what he said." (p. 111).

There are only a few expressions from this living word. It is a poor little thing but it is not the way to be written and written about what you believe, and of the kind of spiritual and spiritual and what you have written or spoken about the same you see the way you see it. I have heard you speak of it. One of the most and most grateful of the letters of conversation is the one of Christ. I. Albert's letters, in which, whether, as conversation in his language to be /or I. Albert's letters, there is some evidence of what we are looking for and that I have seen and the spiritual spiritual conversation and confidence that spiritual decision. I will get you that - but I will write from several and you may have the feeling of some of the best love letters than you.

I have just finished the reading of your book, or article and by me, and that was a great blessing of your work. It is not what you have written. I cannot express to you the joy I received in reading it. Your loving and of my interest and my spiritual decision by your part makes it still in the University of Christ and the witness of the church and I have tried to interest in a private way, I am very much myself and in the way of evidence and decision to be so that we give you evidence giving in the living word. I am called to serve. It has fully expressed the Christian witness that witness of the good and that is the witness of a good living word.

The last day of your living word that witness of the church and by me, I read it and decided to write you as much as I could as a personal expression of it. I probably will send you some more and evidence, but in the line of what I have written and I have possibly promised I would like to have you have living, as I have said the church.

"... is ... for ... .."

"... .. with its value and importance, ... .. It is the ... .. as well as ... .."

"For ... .. after reading your recent ... .. I cannot refrain from writing. I ... .."

"I have just read '... ..' and I can't ... .."

"Reading this ... .. I feel convinced that you will ... .."

"This ... .. I am ... .."

"... .. I have written quite ... .. I could answer some of your criticisms ... .."











CAN EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANS SUPPORT OUR FOREIGN BOARD?

An Inquiry Presented for the Consideration  
of the Evangelical Members  
of the  
Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.

By  
J. Gresham Machen

April, 1929

Every agency appealing for funds should be willing to give an account of its stewardship to those to whom it appeals. This principle applies to the Board of Foreign Missions of our Presbyterian Church. The Board is supported not by a tax levied on the members of the Church, but by voluntary contributions. If contributors think that their gifts are being devoted by the Board to the ends for the sake of which they have contributed them, then they will continue their support; otherwise they cannot reasonably be expected to do so.

There are some contributors who need have no hesitation about continuing their support of the Board. Those are the contributors that are interested in the social or material or educational aspects of the Board's work. It is perfectly clear that our Foreign Board is performing a valuable humanitarian service in many parts of the world, and those who want to contribute to such a humanitarian service may probably have confidence in this particular agency. But there are other contributors who may well have grave doubts as to whether they are justified in continuing their gifts. These are the contributors who are interested in propagating the gospel of Jesus Christ as it is contained in the whole Word of God. Can these Bible-loving and Bible-believing Christians conscientiously continue their support of our Foreign Board? About that question there is widespread doubt.

Obviously the question cannot possibly be answered by pronouncements of the General Assembly; for the distrust which evangelical Christians have with respect to the Board itself applies in equal measure to the Assembly. When, indeed, the issue between the Bible and modern unbelief is clearly presented, the Assembly usually stands on the side of the Bible; (1) repeated pronouncements have affirmed that the full truthfulness of Scripture, the virgin birth, the substitutionary atonement, the bodily resurrection, and the miracles of our Lord, are essential doctrines of our Faith. (2) But these pronouncements have been made, practically speaking, a dead letter by the fact that the machinery of the Church is almost altogether in the hands of those who are concealing the real gravity of the situation that exists. Evasive reports as to the state of the Church, like that of the Commission of Fifteen of 1925-1927, will hardly restore the confidence of evangelical Christians; on the contrary, they will in the end do more to destroy confidence than any open presentation of the facts could possibly do. If, therefore, the Foreign Board is to regain the lost confidence of evangelical Christians

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(1) The Assembly stood on the side of the Bible in the "Gantz case" in 1925. In 1927, in the judicial case concerning the licensure of candidates in the Presbytery of New York, it stood against the Bible and in favor of modern unbelief, but only because of the fact that the Moderator, Dr. Speer, quite illegally permitted the representatives of the Synod of New York, who were parties in interest, to vote in the case.

(2) See the pronouncement of the General Assembly of 1910 confirmed by that of 1923 (Minutes, 1923, p. 253).

#3.

in the Church, it cannot do so by any appeal to ecclesiastical committees, but can only do so by meeting squarely the objections of individual givers. These individual givers must still raise the question: "Can evangelical Christians conscientiously contribute to our Foreign Board?"

I shall not now attempt to answer that question in any comprehensive way; I shall not attempt any comprehensive examination of the work which the Board is carrying on in foreign lands; but shall merely refer to certain disquieting facts which have come under my immediate observation. Those disquieting facts concern, first, the treatment of candidates for the mission field and, second, the pronouncements of Dr. Robert E. Speer.

I.

With regard to the former subject, my position as professor in Princeton Theological Seminary has given me rather unusual opportunities for observation. I have been thrown into close spiritual contact with a large body of young men who graduate from our Seminary from year to year. These young men, of course, differ widely as to the clearness with which they have received into their minds and hearts the gospel of the Cross of Christ; and, in particular, they differ widely in the degree of bravery with which they are resolved to proclaim that gospel in the presence of the unbelief now rampant in the Church. But the large majority of them - indeed a proportion truly amazing in view of the hostile

#4.

forces now abroad in the world - have resolved to stand firmly for that gospel of the Cross, and firmly against the current indifferentism and unbelief.

Some of these men have cherished as the ambition of their lives the thought of going to the foreign mission field. At last the time approaches for the realization of their high resolve. They meet in conference with representatives of our Board of Foreign Missions. What impression is made by these conferences upon their minds? Are these young men commended for the clearness with which they recognize the insufficiency of all other ways of salvation save the Cross of Christ considered as a substitutionary death for our sins; are they warned against the deadly peril of making common cause with those who preach the "other gospel" of agnostic Modernism; are they encouraged to trust, not in ecclesiastical combinations of human influences, but simply and solely in the Spirit of God making use of the blessed gospel that the Scriptures contain; are they commended for their understanding of the distinctiveness of our Reformed Faith over against various subtractions from the full Scripture doctrine of the grace of God; are they confirmed in their sense of the high liberty of the Presbyterian minister whether at home or abroad? I can certainly, to say the least, find no clear evidence that such is the case. On the contrary, these young men, so far as I can judge by the spiritual effect on them, are given the impression that they are expected to conform to

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the policy of church cooperation and union which the representatives of the Board favor, and that not separation from the non-Christian world, whether within or without the visible Church, but cooperation with those who differ from us is the crying need of the hour.

My impression with regard to this matter is strengthened by the official "Candidate Reference Blank" which I have received a number of times from the Board when information is requested regarding prospective missionaries. That reference blank includes among commendable qualities about whose possession by the candidate information is desired, such things as "tolerance of point of view of others", "desire to progress in spiritual truth", "sanity" (explained as "absence of tendency to extreme views"). Clearly a high mark with regard to these qualities is treated as being in the candidate's favor. No doubt there is a sense in which these questions can be answered in the affirmative even in the case of a man who is most clearly determined to be loyal to Christ and to be separate from the unbelieving world. But the trouble is that there are no other questions on this blank to determine whether the candidate is resolved not to tolerate the point of view of those who are opposed to the gospel of Christ as it is set forth in Holy Scripture, and whether he himself is clear in

#6.

his understanding of the great issue between supernaturalism and naturalism, between evangelical religion and non-doctrinal religion, which now faces the Church. There is, moreover, not one word to determine the candidate's intellectual attainments as over against his intellectual capacity; there is not one word to determine his knowledge of the contents of the gospel. Such a questionnaire, because of the choice of leading questions, creates very plainly the impression that "tolerance of opposing views" is far more valued by the Foreign Board than loyalty to the whole word of God.

The same impression is also created by the "Application Form" which the candidates themselves are asked to fill out. That form contains the following question (Section I, Question 17):

Does your experience justify the belief that you can cheerfully accept and support the decision of a majority, even if the decision is contrary to your own opinions?

It is difficult to see how any Christian man, certainly how any Protestant, can possibly answer such a question in the affirmative. The Rev. Lindsay S. B. Hadley, indeed, the Candidate Secretary of the Board, in his letter to me of March 8, 1928, distinguishes between "opinions" and "convictions":

This question, as I understand it, has nothing to do with a man's convictions, which naturally we, who are interested in Christian work, would expect a man to hold firmly throughout.

But in making this distinction between opinions and convictions,

#7.

Mr. Hadley seems to differ sharply from the form of government of our Church, where, in Chapter I, Section iv, it is said:

And that no opinion can be either more pernicious or more absurd, than that which brings truth and falsehood upon a level, and represents it as of no consequence what a man's opinions are (*italics mine*).

Here the word "opinion" seems clearly to be used in the sense in which Mr. Hadley uses the word "conviction". And surely, in this difference, the Form of Government and not Mr. Hadley is right. The man who does not share a certain view is always inclined to regard that view as an "opinion"; the man who does share it is inclined to regard it as a "conviction". "Opinion" and "conviction", therefore, from the point of view with which we are now concerned, are practically speaking synonymous terms. I still do not see, therefore, how any evangelical Christian, in this day of widespread defection from the faith, can possibly answer in the affirmative the question in the Application Form.

This impression is deepened by an examination of Section IV in the Application Form, which deals with "Religious Experience". That section is declared by the Candidate Secretary in the letter to which reference has already been made, to be "very definite". The secretary writes as follows:



#8.

This Question (Question 17 of Section I), as I understand it, has nothing to do with a man's convictions, which naturally we, who are interested in Christian work, would expect a man to hold firmly throughout. Such statements, however, would come on page 3 under "Religious Experience", which, as you will see are very definite. (*italics mine*).

Let us now turn to those statements which Mr. Hadley declared to be "very definite". The only questions in the sections which can by any chance be referred to are Questions 3,5,6. The last two of these read as follows:

5. Do you believe that in every form of mission work the paramount duty of every missionary is to make Jesus Christ known as Saviour, Lord, and Master?

6. Is it your purpose to make this the chief aim of your missionary career, no matter what special duties may be assigned to you?

Are these the questions which Mr. Hadley regards as "very definite"? Surely the adjective as applied to them is strangely misplaced; for the questions are utterly vague. All the terms used - "Saviour", "Lord" and "Master" - are used today in such widely diverse senses that the questions could be answered in the affirmative by men who from the point of view of the Bible and of evangelical Christians are unbelievers of a very thoroughgoing kind. That the Candidate Secretary of our Board of Foreign Missions should speak of such studiously vague language as being "very definite" raises in very insistent fashion the question whether evangelical Christians can possibly continue

#9.

to contribute to such a Board.

This question becomes still more insistent when we examine the remaining one of the three questions to which reference has just been made. That question is Question 3. It reads as follows:

3. Have you any views which might prevent your harmonious cooperation with the missionaries of the Presbyterian Church?

This question must surely be taken in connection with Question 17 of Section I which has been quoted above. The candidate must have no views that prevent his harmonious cooperation with the missionaries of the Presbyterian Church, and he must be willing to submit his opinion to the majority vote of any group of such missionaries to which he may belong. It is surely a large promise; and we ought to consider carefully what it may involve. What may those "opinions" be which the candidate must, on occasion, be allowed to over-ride his own?

The impression has certainly been made upon some candidates that among the opinions which he is required to allow to over-ride his own are opinions like those which led to the formation of the United Church of Canada; the impression has clearly been made that former service in the Presbyterian Church of Canada (called by its enemies the "Continuing" Presbyterian Church) is to be regarded as a ground of suspicion when a candidate comes before the representatives of our Board.

#10.

Mr. Hadley says that that is not the case; yet in view of his correspondence with me I cannot see how any other impression could possibly have been produced. The whole impression is that the candidate must be ready on occasion to give up the Faith of our Church in accordance with a majority vote, as though he were merely changing a suit of clothes.

At any rate there is one set of "opinions" with which a missionary in these days can hardly avoid contact. It is the kind of opinion represented by the "Auburn Affirmation", which declares in perfectly plain language that the full truthfulness of Scripture, the virgin birth, the substitutionary atonement, the bodily resurrection and the miracle of our Lord are non-essential even for the ministers in our Church. The Affirmation has been signed by about thirteen hundred of our ministers, and unquestionably the point of view that it represents is shared by very large numbers of ministers who did not sign it. What guarantee has the candidate that such opinions are not represented on our mission field, and that it is not to such opinions that he is being asked by Question 17 to be willing to submit his own?

But it is not merely such general disquietude that suggests itself in this connection. For it is a fact - a fact which will come as a surprise and shock to many evangelical Christians throughout the Church, but still a fact all the same - that Mr. Hadley, the Candidate Secretary of our Foreign Board,

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is himself a signer of the Affirmation. This secretary who fills this peculiarly important position, who stands in this peculiarly intimate relation to the men who desire to devote themselves to foreign mission work, is a signer of a formal statement that is hostile not only to evangelical Christianity but to all Christianity at its very root.

The cancer of the Auburn Affirmation and what it represents, moreover, cuts far deeper into our Foreign Board than merely by the presence of an Affirmationist in the position of Candidate Secretary. No less than four among the fifteen ministerial members of the Board are signers of this notable anti-evangelical pronouncement. And what, in this situation, is the attitude of the staff, as distinguished from the governing members, of the Board? Dr. Robert E. Speer, surely, is qualified to give the answer. His answer is given in a letter which he sent to me, jointly with Dr. John A. Marquis of the Board of National Missions, on May 6, 1926:

First - all the members of the Boards of the Church were elected by the General Assembly. The Assembly clearly believed that they were loyal and faithful ministers and members of the Church. We know of not one who does not accept the Constitution and Standards of the Church and who is not truly and loyally evangelical.

At the time when that letter was written, no less than six out of fourteen ministerial members of the National Board and five out of fifteen ministerial members of the Foreign Board were

#12.

signers of the Auburn Affirmation. Yet all these gentlemen are regarded as "truly and loyally evangelical" by Dr. Marquis and Dr. Speer! What possible confidence can really consistent evangelical Christians have in Boards whose Standards of what is truly and loyally evangelical are such as that? What kind of mission work is it in which the full truthfulness of Holy Scripture, the virgin birth, the substitutionary atonement, the bodily resurrection and the miracles of our Lord are, all and severally, regarded as non-essential? Certainly it is a kind of mission work which no consistent evangelical Christian can support.

Is it such questions with regard to which candidates for the mission field are required to show "tolerance of the point of view of others"? The whole tendency, the whole attitude of the Candidate Department strongly creates such an impression. The question is not whether men who are lukewarm in their testimony against Modernism will be sent to the foreign field, but whether men who are faithful in their testimony, will be sent. One thing at least is clear: No real evangelical Christian, certainly no intelligent one, can possibly, without disloyalty to his Saviour and Lord, contribute to any mission work that is favorable to the point of view represented by the Auburn Affirmation. The Affirmation is hostile to repeated pronouncements of the General

#13.

Assembly. But that is not the serious objection to it. The really serious objection to it is that it is hostile to the Word of God.

## II.

A second cause of disquiet regarding the Foreign Board is found in the utterances of Dr. Robert E. Speer.

Among those utterances, one deserves special attention. It is the booklet, "Are Foreign Missions Done For?", which Dr. Speer has recently distributed widely in the Church. "This little book", says the preface, "is an attempt to meet fairly and honestly some of the present day questions which are raised with regard to the foreign missionary enterprise." The booklet has been widely distributed, and evidently it is intended by its author to be an apologia for the work of our Foreign Board. Here then, if anywhere, the evangelical Christian might fairly expect to obtain some sort of answer to the questions which he has felt obliged to raise.

Are such expectations satisfied? We are obliged to say very plainly that they are not. Far from setting forth any clearly evangelical position on the great specific questions that agitate the Church, Dr. Speer's book from beginning to end is dishearteningly evasive and vague.

This vagueness appears in most distressing form just when the author seems to suppose that what he says is

#14.

particularly clear. No less than twice in the course of the book Dr. Speer quotes an utterance made by a conference held at Princeton in 1920. <sup>(1)</sup> That utterance, he says, has "nothing uncertain or confused" about it; "it is definite and comprehensive"(p.56). The evangelical reader will naturally turn with high hopes to an utterance for which such claims are advanced. Surely, he will say, the utterance must set forth in no uncertain terms the authority of the written Word as over against the current mysticism that turns rather to Christian experience or Christ in the soul; surely it must declare the absolute necessity, for every missionary, of belief in the virgin birth of our Lord, in His bodily resurrection, in His substitutionary death as a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice, in His supernatural return, in the absolute necessity of the new birth as over against any development of human goodness, in justification by faith alone, in salvation by the sovereign grace of God.

Are such hopes realized? What is this evangelical utterance which Dr. Speer declares to be so comprehensive and so plain? The evangelical Christian may have difficulty in believing his eyes when he finds that the following is all that it is:

The supreme and controlling aim of foreign missions is to make the Lord Jesus Christ known to all men as their Divine Saviour and to persuade them to become His disciples; to gather these

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(1) Pp.56,81. In one other place, also, a practically identical declaration is quoted (p.64).

#15.

disciples into Christian churches which shall be self-propagating, self-supporting, and self-governing; to cooperate, so long as necessary, with these churches in the evangelizing of their countrymen and in bringing to bear on all human life the spirit and principles of Christ."

Such is the utterance which is declared to be so definite and so clear! No doubt it will seem clear to the agnostic Modernism that is rampant in our Church; for it is couched in just the vague, ambiguous language that modernism loves. All the terms, "Lord", "Divine Saviour", "disciples", and, alas, "Jesus Christ" - are used today in senses entirely alien to the Word of God; and the utterance ignores altogether the grand particularities of the Christian faith. The utterance speaks of "the spirit and principles of Christ"; but "spirit" is spelled with a small letter and the Third Person of the blessed Trinity is ignored; the utterance speaks of Jesus as Saviour, but there is nothing about the sin from which He saves or the Cross by which salvation was wrought; the utterance speaks of bringing to bear upon human life "the spirit and principles of Christ", but there is nothing about the necessity of the mysterious, regenerating work of God's Spirit, without which "the spirit and principles of Christ" (whatever they may be) are quite powerless to save men from wrath to come. In short, there is no hint here that the foreign missionary has a message to mankind lost in sin, that that message is contained solely in the Bible as the



#16.

Word of God, and that the heart and core of the message is found in redemption by the precious blood of Christ. Yet Dr. Speer says (p.81): "No better answer can be given to those who wish to know what our foreign missionaries conceive that they are about and how they are setting about it than to quote the more important of the Findings of this Conference".<sup>(1)</sup> We can only say that if this be the answer which our Foreign Board has to give regarding the content of the Christian message, then it is difficult to see how evangelical Christians can continue their support of the Board. So far as this declaration indicates, the Board may be propagating the vague "ether gospel" of non-doctrinal Modernism just as probably as the blessed gospel that the Bible contains.

The vagueness that characterizes this utterance also characterizes the whole booklet of Dr. Speer. There is in it no mention of the virgin birth of our Lord and of the absolute necessity of belief in it for every missionary, no mention of the bodily resurrection, no mention of the full truthfulness of Scripture (indeed no mention of Scripture, as such, at all), no mention of the supernatural return of Christ, no mention of the new birth of believers, no mention of justification by faith, no mention of the atoning death of Christ?<sup>(2)</sup> What sort of gospel is it from which all

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(1) Then follows (pp.81-85) the paragraph quoted above and a fuller transcript of the findings of the Conference, which, however, does not really go beyond this paragraph so far as questions of principle are concerned.

(2) There is one bare mention of "the Crucified and ever Living Lord" (p.37).

#17.

that makes a gospel has thus been left out? In this vague message the offense of the Cross is done away, but so is the glory and the power.

In one thing, indeed, we agree heartily with Dr. Speer. We agree with him heartily in holding that foreign missions are not "done for"; we agree with him heartily in holding that the "missionary enterprise" is the greatest enterprise in all the world.

Some of the testimonies to which he appeals seem to us, indeed, very unconvincing. These are the testimonies of non-Christian men in mission countries - testimonies to the "moral and spiritual values" of Christianity, to the loftiness of Jesus' teaching and example, to the transforming power of His "principles". Sadness comes over us as we read Dr. Speer's rehearsal of such testimonies. Would they ever have been rendered if missionaries had been faithful in preaching the real Christ? The plain fact is that the real Christ advanced stupendous claims. Unless those claims are true, He is not a perfect ideal at all. He uttered a "hard saying"; and many of His former followers went back and walked no more with Him. Has that hard saying been kept in the background today, that Jesus might win this superficial and patronizing favor among those who have not been born again? Could that favor ever have been won if missionaries had put

#18.

Calvary in its proper place, if they had been willing to bear the offence of the Cross? Such questions do arise in our minds when we read Dr. Speer's enthusiastic words about the permeation of the nations with Christian principles and the Christian "spirit".

We do not, indeed, undervalue a good testimony to Christian living by those who are without. How often in recent years has such testimony been wrung from unwilling lips by those who amid the fires of persecution have been true to Jesus Christ! Still, the message of the Cross, when it is faithfully presented, is a very offensive thing. It is to the Jews a stumbling block, to the Greeks foolishness. When the offence of it is avoided, we are inclined to doubt the faithfulness of the preaching. God grant that the Church, both at home and abroad, may never be ashamed of the offence of the Cross!

But if we differ from Dr. Speer in the arguments by which we defend foreign missions, we agree with him with all our soul in the conclusion. We agree with him in holding that foreign missions are the only hope of the world. Indeed, far more poignant is our sense of the need of foreign missions than is his. For we do not share his favorable view of  
(1)  
human nature; the primary fact, we hold, is that mankind

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(1) "What is needed" Dr. Speer says (p.41), "is that everywhere in all lands man should be set free from what is evil and bad and that human good should be built by God's help through Christ and His Gospel." What a difference there is between this teaching and Jesus' words to Nicodemus: "Ye must be born again"! Compare the beginning of Dr. Speer's book, "The unfinished Task of Foreign Missions (1926), where, on pp. 10f., the use of human goodness - illustrated by Jerome K. Jerome's "Passing of the Third Floor Back"-is represented as being the method of Jesus!

#19.

everywhere is lost in sin. We cannot keep that fact in the background as Dr. Speer does. It and it alone constitutes the really profound need of the world. How great then is the obligation to preach the one message that will save lost sinners and bring them into peace with God!

But where is that message to be found? Where are missionaries to find the message that they shall proclaim throughout the world? That is surely a basic question. Yet no clear answer to it can be found in Dr. Speer's book - - certainly not the true answer. Dr. Speer speaks of "the search for the infinite riches of God in Christ" (p.37), "a quest for an ever enlarging understanding of the fulness of Christ" (ibid.); but nowhere does he speak of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as being the true source of the missionary message. He hopes for "some exposure of treasures in Christ or in the New Testament or in the Holy Spirit which have been hidden as yet". (p.46). We cannot help feeling that the Bible is here removed from the unique place in which it is put -- and rightly put -- in the Standards of our Church. New exposures of truth, Dr. Speer says, are to be expected from Christ or from the New Testament or from the Holy Spirit. What boundless confusion is here, what woeful lack of clearness as to  
(1)  
the very foundation of all missionary work!

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[1] Compare Dr. Speer's book "The New Opportunity of the Church", 1919, p.44: "Deeper and more religious meanings than we have ever proclaimed are discerned in the Cross of Christ, revealed, and illustrated in the war." Does Dr. Speer mean that these new "meanings" are deeper and more religious than those that are set forth in the fifth chapter of II Corinthians or in the eighth chapter of Romans? And have these Scriptural "meanings" never been proclaimed from New Testament times until the World War? Ah, how far are we here from the majestic simplicity of the gospel of the Cross!

What is the missionary to say when he begins work on his field? Is he to appeal to a Christ in his own soul, is he to draw from his own experience for the content of his message, is he to place the treasures which he finds in the New Testament alongside of other treasures which he finds in Christ or in the Holy Spirit? If he does so, he has deserted the basis upon which all the teaching of our Church rests -- namely, the authority of the blessed written word of God.

Very different should be the attitude of the true missionary of the Cross. His function is a humbler function, and yet a function which in its humility may prove to be the most glorious function of all. His function is not to draw upon mystical experiences of his own for the content of his message, but simply to set forth what is taught in God's Word -- both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament, both in the words of Jesus in the Gospels and in the words of the Holy Spirit in the Epistles of Paul. The function of the true missionary is simply to open the pages of the Holy Book and say: "Thus saith the Lord."

He cannot, indeed, do that with any power unless he has received the message in his own heart, unless he knows in his own soul the living Saviour whom the Scriptures present. The Holy Spirit must illumine for him the sacred page. But the content of his message will be based upon the Bible and upon the Bible alone.

When the message is based upon the Bible alone, the content of the message will be very different from that which now is

#21.

heard. Gone will be all vagueness like the vagueness of Dr. Speer's little book. Instead, there will stand out the great verities which the Church is commissioned to set forth -- the awful holiness of God, the deadly guilt and power of sin, the true deity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, His virgin birth, His mighty miracles, His obedience to the law, His righteousness with which believers are clothed, His sacrifice to satisfy divine justice and reconcile us to God. His glorious resurrection in the body in which he suffered, His ascension into Heaven, the sending of the Holy Spirit, the utter powerlessness of man, the sovereign grace of God by which alone are made alive those who were dead in trespasses and sins, the new and right relation to God received only by those in whom the Holy Spirit has wrought faith, the new walk and conversation of those who have been received by God and made alive from the dead, the dread yet glorious hope of Christ's supernatural appearing in glory when He shall come to judge the world.

A new and glorious day will it be for a distracted Church when that message again shall ring out clear, when there shall be a return from the imaginations of men's hearts to God's holy Word. Meanwhile there are those who already love and honor that Word. What shall they do in the present day? Can they continue to support a mission agency that has wandered so far? There are many men and women in our Church who are raising that question. And they will raise it yet more earnestly if they read Dr. Speer's little book with care.

What, then, should evangelical Christians now do? Can they conscientiously continue their contributions to such a Board?

The question might seem to have been answered by what has already been said. But the answer is not really quite so simple as it seems. We ought never to forget that despite the attitude of the Board there are many faithful missionaries under the Board who are proclaiming the full gospel as it is set forth in the whole Word of God. Those faithful missionaries of the Cross should not be allowed to suffer because of the faults of the administrative agency under which they stand. Until some truly evangelical agency is formed to care for those faithful missionaries, evangelical people cannot withhold their support of the present Board.

But has the time not come for the establishment of a truly evangelical missionary agency in the Presbyterian Church -- an agency to which evangelical Christians can contribute, not with hesitation and distrust, but with all confidence and joy, an agency which shall keep clear of entangling alliances and shall proclaim the full glories of the Reformed Faith as they are found in the Word of God? The question may well be raised; it may well be commended to the prayerful consideration of that large body of Christian laymen in our Church who love their Bibles and the crucified Saviour set forth therein, who know that the "principles of Jesus" will never save the world -- nor what Dr. Speer calls His  
(1)  
"redeeming life" -- but only His precious redeeming blood,

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(1) The relation of the Foreign Missionary Enterprise to the World Situation Today," in Christian Students and World Problems, 1924, p. 139.

#23.

who are not seeking the patronizing testimony of non-Christian men, which Dr. Speer rehearses at such length, but who are willing to bear the offence of the Cross.

If such an evangelical agency is formed, its virtues must be not merely negative but positive; it must not only avoid denying the gospel, but it must preach the gospel in all its fullness and in all its power. One fundamental vice underlies the defence of the present Board; its representatives seem to think that the burden of proof is to be placed upon those who deny that the Board is sounding an evangelical note. "Be definite in your charges", they say in effect; "point out individual missionaries against whom charges of heresy can be preferred, or else keep silent with your criticism and continue your support." What is the trouble with such a line of defence? Is it not that the defence is negative merely? The assumption seems to be that if the missionaries or the secretaries of the Board cannot be proved to be saying that which is contrary to the gospel of Christ, then all is well. But cannot these gentlemen really understand any better than that the point of view of evangelical Christians in our Church? Cannot they understand that what evangelical Christians demand is not an agency that avoids denying the gospel of the Cross of Christ, that perhaps pays perfunctory lip service to it on explicit demand, but an agency that is on fire with that gospel, that never for one moment keeps it in the background, that preaches it in season and out of season, that combats what is contradictory to it, that presents it as the only way of salvation for lost and



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dying man? If in answer to the present paper Dr. Speer should affirm his belief in the atonement of Christ -- that heart of the gospel which, so far as we have been able to observe, he has in his recent books dealt with only to bring it into connection with the death of soldiers in the war, or otherwise to explain it away -- if he should affirm his belief in the virgin birth of Christ, and in the other four basic elements of our faith to which the Auburn Affirmationists have done despite, if even he should affirm his conviction of the necessity of these beliefs, still our objections would not really be removed. What we long for is not a missionary agency that affirms belief in the essential things of the faith when asked to do so, but a missionary agency that proclaims those things joyously, spontaneously, and all the time. The difference here concerns the question where the really central emphasis is to be placed. It is not merely a difference of the mind, but a difference of the heart. What is the real impact of our Foreign Board upon the world? Is it the preaching of Christ crucified -- not in some pale modern sense, not as a thing upon which new light is shed by the death of soldiers in the war, but as a blessed mystery revealed in the Word of God? If it is, then we can support that Board? But if not, we must seek some other agency that will proclaim this thing which to us is the breath of life. Christ has bought us with His own precious blood. Woe be to us if we proclaim, either by our words or by our gifts, some other gospel than the gospel of the Cross. And may God show us how we can best proclaim that gospel through the length and breadth of the world!

CAN EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANS SUPPORT OUR FOREIGN BOARD?

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An Inquiry Presented for the Consideration  
of the Evangelical Members  
of the  
Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.

By

J. Gresham Machen

April 1929

Every agency appealing for funds should be willing to give an account of its stewardship to those to whom it appeals. This principle applies to the Board of Foreign Missions of our Presbyterian Church. The Board is supported not by a tax levied on the members of the Church, but by voluntary contributions. If contributors think that their gifts are being devoted by the Board to the ends for the sake of which they have contributed them, then they will continue their support; otherwise they cannot reasonably be expected to do so.

There are some contributors who need have no hesitation about continuing their support of the Board. Those are the contributors that are interested in the social or material or educational aspects of the Board's work. It is perfectly clear that our Foreign Board is performing a valuable humanitarian service in many parts of the world, and those who want to contribute to such a humanitarian service may probably have confidence in this particular agency. But there are other contributors who may well have grave doubts as to whether they are justified in continuing their gifts. These are the contributors who are interested in propagating the gospel of Jesus Christ as it is contained in the whole Word of God. Can these Bible-loving and Bible-believing Christians conscientiously continue their support of our Foreign Board?

Obviously the question cannot possibly be answered by pronouncements of the General Assembly; for the distrust which evangelical Christians have with respect to the Board itself applies in equal measure to the Assembly. When, indeed, the issue between the Bible and modern belief is clearly presented, the Assembly usually stands on the side of the Bible; (1) repeated pronouncements have affirmed that the full truthfulness of Scripture, the virgin birth, the substitutionary atonement, the bodily resurrection, and the miracles of our Lord, are essential doctrines of our Faith (2). But these pronouncements have been made, practically speaking, a dead letter by the fact that the machinery of the Church is almost altogether in the hands of those who are concealing the real gravity of the situation that exists. Evasive reports as to the state of the Church, like that of the Commission of Fifteen of 1925-1927, will hardly restore the confidence of evangelical Christians; on the contrary, they will in the end do more to destroy confidence than any open presentation of the facts could possibly do. If, therefore, the Foreign Board is to regain the lost confidence of evangelical Christians in the Church, it cannot do so by any appeal to ecclesiastical

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(1) The Assembly stood on the side of the Bible in the "Gantz case" in 1925. In 1927, in the judicial case concerning the licensure of candidates in the Presbytery of New York, it stood against the Bible and in favor of modern unbelief, but only because of the fact that the Moderator, Dr. Speer, quite illegally permitted the representatives of the Synod of New York, who were parties in interest, to vote in the case.

(2) See the pronouncement of the General Assembly of 1910 confirmed by that of 1923 (Minutes, 1923, p. 253).

#2.

committees, but can only do so by meeting squarely the objections of individual givers. These individual givers must still raise the question: "Can evangelical Christians conscientiously contribute to our Foreign Board?"

I shall not now attempt to answer that question in any comprehensive way; I shall not attempt any comprehensive examination of the work which the Board is carrying on in foreign lands; but shall merely refer to certain disquieting facts which have come under my immediate observation. Those disquieting facts concern, first, the treatment of candidates for the mission field and, second, the pronouncements of Dr. Robert E. Speer.

### I.

With regard to the former subject, my position as professor in Princeton Theological Seminary has given me rather unusual opportunities for observation. I have been thrown into close spiritual contact with a large body of young men who graduate from our seminary from year to year. These young men, of course, differ widely as to the clearness with which they have received into their minds and hearts the gospel of the Cross of Christ; and, in particular, they differ widely in the degree of bravery with which they are resolved to proclaim that gospel in the presence of the unbelief now rampant in the Church. But the large majority of them - indeed a proportion truly amazing in view of the hostile forces now abroad in the world - have resolved to stand firmly for that gospel of the Cross, and firmly against the current indifferentism and unbelief.

Some of these men have cherished as the ambition of their lives the thought of going to the foreign mission field. At last the time approaches for the realization of their high resolve. They meet in conference with representatives of our Board of Foreign Missions. What impression is made by these conferences upon their minds? Are these young men commended for the clearness with which they recognize the insufficiency of all other ways of salvation save the Cross of Christ considered as a substitutionary death for our sins; are they warned against the deadly peril of making common cause with those who preach the "other gospel" of agnostic Modernism; are they encouraged to trust, not in ecclesiastical combinations of human influences, but simply and solely in the Spirit of God making use of the blessed gospel that the Scriptures contain; are they commended for their understanding of the distinctiveness of our Reformed Faith over against various subtractions from the full Scripture doctrine of the grace of God; are they confirmed in their sense of the high liberty of the Presbyterian minister whether at home or abroad? I can certainly, to say the least, find no clear evidence that such is the case. On the contrary, these young men, so far as I can judge by the spiritual effect on them, are given the impression that they are expected to conform to the policy of church cooperation and union which the representatives of the Board favor, and that not separation from the non-Christian world, whether within or without the visible Church, but cooperation with those who differ from us is the crying need of the hour.

My impression with regard to this matter is strengthened by the

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official "Candidate Reference Blank" which I have received a number of times from the Board when information is requested regarding prospective missionaries. The reference blank includes among commendable qualities about whose possession by the candidate information is desired, such things as "tolerance of point of view of others", "desire to progress in spiritual truth," "sanity" (explained as "absence of tendency to extreme views"). Clearly a high mark with regard to these qualities is treated as being in the candidate's favor. No doubt there is a sense in which these questions can be answered in the affirmative even in the case of a man who is most clearly determined to be loyal to Christ and to be separate from the unbelieving world. But the trouble is that there are no other questions on this blank to determine whether the candidate is resolved not to tolerate the point of view of those who are opposed to the gospel of Christ as it is set forth in Holy Scripture, and whether he himself is clear in his understanding of the great issue between supernaturalism and naturalism, between evangelical religion and non-doctrinal religion, which now faces the Church. There is, moreover, not one word to determine the candidate's intellectual attainments as over against his intellectual capacity; there is not one word to determine his knowledge of the contents of the gospel. Such a questionnaire, because of the choice of leading questions, creates very plainly the impression that "tolerance of opposing views" is far more valued by the Foreign Board than loyalty to the whole Word of God.

The same impression is also created by the "Application Form" which the candidates themselves are asked to fill out. That form contains the following question "Section I, Question 17):

Does your experience justify the belief that you can cheerfully accept and support the decision of a majority, even if the decision is contrary to your own opinions?

It is difficult to see how any Christian man, certainly how any Protestant, can possibly answer such a question in the affirmative. The Rev. Lindsay S.B. Hadley, indeed, the Candidate Secretary of the Board, in his letter to me of March 8, 1928, distinguishes between "opinions" and "convictions":

This question, as I understand it, has nothing to do with a man's convictions, which naturally we, who are interested in Christian work, would expect a man to hold firmly throughout.

But in making this distinction between opinions and convictions, Mr. Hadley seems to differ sharply from the Form of Government of our Church, where in Chapter I, Section iv, it is said:

And that no opinion can be either more pernicious or more absurd, than that which brings truth and falsehood upon a level, and represents it as of no consequence what a man's opinions are (italics mine).

#4.

Here the word "opinion" seems clearly to be used in the sense in which Mr. Hadley uses the word "conviction". And surely, in this difference, the Form of Government and not Mr. Hadley is right. The man who does not share a certain view is always inclined to regard that view as an "opinion"; the man who does share it is inclined to regard it as a "conviction". "Opinion" and "conviction", therefore, from the point of view with which we are now concerned, are practically speaking synonymous terms. I still do not see, therefore, how any evangelical Christian, in this day of widespread defection from the faith, can possibly answer in the affirmative the question in the Application Form.

This impression is deepened by an examination of Section IV in the Application Form, which deals with "Religious Experience". That section is declared by the Candidate Secretary in the letter to which reference has already been made, to be "very definite". The secretary writes as follows:

This question (Question 17 of Section I) as I understand it, has nothing to do with a man's convictions, which naturally we, who are interested in Christian work, would expect a man to hold firmly throughout. Such statements, however, would come on page 3 under "Religious Experience", which, as you will see are very definite (italics mine).

Let us now turn to those statements which Mr. Hadley declared to be "very definite". The only questions in the section which can by any chance be referred to are Questions 3,5,6. The last two of these read as follows:

5. Do you believe that in every form of mission work the paramount duty of every missionary is to make Jesus Christ known as Saviour, Lord, and Master?
6. Is it your purpose to make this the chief aim of your missionary career, no matter what special duties may be assigned to you?

Are these the questions which Mr. Hadley regards as "very definite"? Surely the adjective as applied to them is strangely misplaced; for the questions are utterly vague. All the terms used - "Saviour", "Lord" and "Master" - are used today in such widely diverse senses that the questions could be answered in the affirmative by men who from the point of view of the Bible and of evangelical Christians are unbelievers of a very thoroughgoing kind. That the Candidate Secretary of our Foreign Missions should speak of such studiously vague language as being "very definite" raises in very insistent fashion the question whether evangelical Christians can possibly continue to contribute to such a Board.

This question becomes still more insistent when we examine the remaining one of the three questions to which reference has just been made.

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That question is Question 3. It reads as follows:

3. Have you any views which might prevent your harmonious cooperation with the missionaries of the Presbyterian Church?

This question must surely be taken in connection with Question 17 of Section I which has been quoted above. The candidate must have no views that prevent his harmonious cooperation with the missionaries of the Presbyterian Church, and he must be willing to submit his opinion to the majority vote of any group of such missionaries to which he may belong. It is surely a large promise; and we ought to consider carefully what it may involve. What may those "opinions" be which the candidate must, on occasion, be allowed to override his own?

The impression has certainly been made upon some candidates that among the opinions which he is required to allow to over-ride his own are opinions like those which led to the formation of the United Church of Canada; the impression has clearly been made that former service in the Presbyterian Church of Canada (called by its enemies the "Continuing Presbyterian Church) is to be regarded as a ground of suspicion when a candidate comes before the representatives of our Board. Mr. Hadley says that that is not the case; yet in view of his correspondence with me I cannot see how any other impression could possibly have been produced. The whole impression is that the candidate must be ready on occasion to give up the Faith of our Church in accordance with a majority vote, as though he were merely changing a suit of clothes.

At any rate there is one set of "opinions" with which a missionary in these days can hardly avoid contact. It is the kind of opinion represented by the "Auburn Affirmation", which declares in perfectly plain language that the full truthfulness of Scripture, the virgin birth, the substitutionary atonement, the bodily resurrection and the miracles of our Lord are non-essential even for the ministers in our Church. The Affirmation has been signed by about thirteen hundred of our ministers, and unquestionably the point of view that it represents is shared by very large numbers of ministers who did not sign it. What guarantee has the candidate that such opinions are not represented on our mission field, and that it is not to such opinions that he is being asked by Question 17 to be willing to submit his own?

But it is not merely such general disquietude that suggests itself in this connection. For it is a fact - a fact which will come as a surprise and shock to many evangelical Christians throughout the Church, but still a fact all the same - that Mr. Hadley, the Candidate Secretary of our Foreign Board, is himself a signer of the Affirmation. This Secretary, who fills this peculiarly important position, who stands in this peculiarly intimate relation to the man who desire to devote themselves to foreign mission work, is a signer of a formal statement that is hostile not only to evangelical Christianity but to all Christianity at its very root.

The cancer of the Auburn Affirmation and what it represents, moreover, cuts far deeper into our Foreign Board than merely by the presence of an

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Affirmationist in the position of Candidate Secretary. No less than four among the fifteen ministerial members of the Board are signers of this notable anti-evangelical pronouncement. And what, in this situation, is the attitude of the staff, as distinguished from the governing members, of the Board? Dr. Robert E. Speer, surely, is qualified to give the answer. His answer is given in a letter which he sent to me, jointly with Dr. John A. Marquis of the Board of National Missions, on May 6, 1926:

First - all the members of the Board of the Church were elected by the General Assembly. The Assembly clearly believed that they were loyal and faithful ministers and members of the Church. We know of not one who does not accept the Constitution and Standards of the Church and who is not truly and loyally evangelical.

At the time when that letter was written, no less than six out of fourteen ministerial members of the National Board and five out of fifteen ministerial members of the Foreign Board were signers of the Auburn Affirmation. Yet all these gentlemen are regarded as "truly and loyally evangelical" by Dr. Marquis and Dr. Speer! What possible confidence can really consistent evangelical Christians have in Boards whose standards of what is truly and loyally evangelical are such as this? What kind of mission work is it in which the full truthfulness of Holy Scripture, the virgin birth, the substitutionary atonement, the bodily resurrection and the miracles of our Lord are, all and severally, regarded as non-essential? Certainly it is a kind of mission work which no consistent evangelical Christian can support.

Is it such questions with regard to which candidates for the mission field are required to show "tolerance of the point of view of others"? The whole tendency, the whole attitude of the Candidate Department strongly creates such an impression. The question is not whether men <sup>who</sup> are lukewarm in their testimony against Modernism will be sent to the foreign field, but whether men who are faithful in their testimony, will be sent. One thing at least is clear: No real evangelical Christian, certainly no intelligent one, can possibly, without disloyalty to his Saviour and Lord, contribute to any mission work that is favorable to the point of view represented by the Auburn Affirmation. The Affirmation is hostile to repeated pronouncements of the General Assembly. But that is not the serious objection to it. The really serious objection to it is that it is hostile to the Word of God.

## II.

A second cause of disquiet regarding the Foreign Board is found in the utterances of Dr. Robert E. Speer.

Among those utterances, one deserves special attention. It is the booklet, "Are Foreign Missions Done For?" which Dr. Speer has recently dis-



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tributed widely in the Church. "This little book", says the preface, "is an attempt to meet fairly and honestly some of the present day questions which are raised with regard to the foreign missionary enterprise." The booklet has been widely distributed, and evidently it is intended by its author to be an apologia for the work of our Foreign Board. Here then, if anywhere, the evangelical Christian might fairly expect to obtain some sort of answer to the questions which he has felt obliged to raise.

Are such expectations satisfied? We are obliged to say very plainly that they are not. Far from setting forth any clearly evangelical position on the great specific questions that agitate the Church, Dr. Speer's book from beginning to end is dishearteningly evasive and vague.

This vagueness appears in most distressing form just when the author seems to suppose that what he says is particularly clear. No less than twice in the course of the book Dr. Speer quotes an utterance made by a conference held at Princeton in 1920 (1). That utterance, he says has "nothing uncertain or confused" about it; "it is definite and comprehensive" (p. 56). The evangelical reader will naturally turn with high hopes to an utterance for which such claims are advanced. Surely, he will say, the utterance must set forth in no uncertain terms the authority of the written Word as over against the current mysticism that turns rather to Christian experience or Christ in the soul; surely it must declare the absolute necessity, for every missionary, of belief in the virgin birth of our Lord, in His bodily resurrection, in His substitutionary death as a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice, in His supernatural return, in the absolute necessity of the new birth as over against any development of human goodness, in justification by faith alone, in salvation by the sovereign grace of God.

Are such hopes realized? What is this evangelical utterance which Dr. Speer declares to be so comprehensive and so plain? The evangelical Christian may have difficulty in believing his eyes when he finds that the following is all that it is:

"The supreme and controlling aim of foreign missions is to make the Lord Jesus Christ known to all men as their Divine Saviour and to persuade them to become His disciples; to gather these disciples into Christian churches which shall be self-propagating, self-supporting, and self-governing; to cooperate, so long as necessary, with these churches in the evangelizing of their countrymen and in bringing to bear on all human life the spirit and principles of Christ."

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(1) Pp. 56, 81. In one other place, also, a practically identical declaration is quoted. (p. 64).

Such is the utterance which is declared to be so definite and so clear! No doubt it will seem clear to the agnostic Modernism that is rampant in our Church; for it is couched in just the vague, ambiguous language that Modernism loves. All the terms - "Lord", "Divine Saviour", "disciples", and, alas, "Jesus Christ" - are used today in senses entirely alien to the Word of God; and the utterance ignores altogether the grand particularities of the Christian faith. The utterance speaks of "the spirit and principles of Christ"; but "spirit" is spelled with a small letter and the Third Person of the blessed Trinity is ignored; the utterance speaks of Jesus as Saviour, but there is nothing about the sin from which He saves or the Cross by which salvation was wrought; the utterance speaks of bringing to bear upon human life "the spirit and principles of Christ", but there is nothing about the necessity of the mysterious, regenerating work of God's Spirit, without which "the spirit and principles of Christ" (whatever they may be) are quite powerless to save men from wrath to come. In short, there is no hint here that the foreign missionary has a message to mankind lost in sin, that that message is contained solely in the Bible as the word of God, and that the heart and core of the message is found in redemption by the precious blood of Christ. Yet Dr. Speer says (p.81): "No better answer can be given to those who wish to know what our foreign missionaries conceive that they are about and how they are setting about it than to quote the more important of the Findings of this Conference".<sup>(1)</sup> We can only say that if this be the answer which our Foreign Board has to give regarding the content of the Christian message, then it is difficult to see how evangelical Christians can continue their support of the Board. So far as this declaration indicates, the Board may be propagating the vague "other gospel" of non-doctrinal Modernism just as probably as the blessed gospel that the Bible contains.

The vagueness that characterizes this utterance also characterizes the whole booklet of Dr. Speer. There is in it no mention of the virgin birth of our Lord and of the absolute necessity of belief in it for every missionary, no mention of the bodily resurrection, no mention of the full truthfulness of Scripture (indeed no mention of Scripture, as such, at all), no mention of the supernatural return of Christ, no mention of the new birth of believers, no mention of justification by faith, no mention of the atoning death of Christ?<sup>(2)</sup> What sort of gospel is it from which all that makes a gospel has thus been left out? In this vague message the offense of the Cross is done away, but so is the glory and the power.

Some of the testimonies to which he appeals seem to us, indeed, very unconvincing. There are the testimonies of non-Christian men in mission countries - testimonies to the "moral and spiritual values" of Christianity, to the loftiness of Jesus' teaching and example, to the transforming power of His "principles." Sadness comes over us as we read Dr. Speer's rehearsal of such testimonies. Would they ever have been rendered if missionaries had been faithful in preaching the real Christ? The plain fact is that the real Christ advanced stupendous claims. Unless those claims are true, He is not a perfect

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(1) Then follows (pp.81-85) the paragraph quoted above and a fuller transcript of the findings of the Conference, which, however, does not really go beyond this paragraph so far as questions of principles are concerned.

(2) There is one bare mention of "the Crucified and ever Living Lord". (p.37).

ideal at all. He uttered a "hard saying"; and many of His former followers went back and walked no more with Him. Has that hard saying been kept in the background today, that Jesus might win this superficial and patronizing favor among those who have not been born again? Could that favor ever have been won if missionaries had put Calvary in its proper place, if they had been willing to bear the offense of the Cross? Such questions do arise in our minds when we read Dr. Speer's enthusiastic words about the permeation of the nations with Christian principles and the Christian "spirit".

We do not, indeed, undervalue a good testimony to Christian living by those who are without. How often in recent years has such testimony been wrung from unwilling lips by those who amid the fires of persecution have been true to Jesus Christ! Still, the message of the Cross, when it is faithfully presented, is a very offensive thing. It is to the Jews a stumbling block, to the Greeks foolishness. When the offense of it is avoided, we are inclined to doubt the faithfulness of the preaching. God grant that the Church, both at home and abroad, may never be ashamed of the offense of the Cross!

But if we differ from Dr. Speer in the arguments by which we defend foreign missions, we agree with him with all our souls in the conclusion. We agree with him in holding that foreign missions are the only hope of the world. Indeed far more poignant is our sense of the need of foreign missions than is his. For we do not share his favorable view of human nature <sup>(1)</sup>; the primary fact, we hold, is that mankind everywhere is lost in sin. We cannot keep that fact in the background as Dr. Speer does. It and it alone constitutes the really profound need of the world. How great then is the obligation to preach the one message that will save lost sinners and bring them into peace with God!

But where is that message to be found? Where are missionaries to find the message that they shall proclaim throughout the world? That is surely a basic question. Yet no clear answer to it can be found in Dr. Speer's book -- certainly not the true answer. Dr. Speer speaks of "the search for the infinite riches of God in Christ" (p.37), "a quest for an ever enlarging understanding of the fulness of Christ" (ibid.); but nowhere does he speak of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as being the true source of the missionary message. He hopes for "some exposure of treasures in Christ or in the New Testament or in the Holy Spirit which have been hidden as yet". (p.46) We cannot help feeling that the Bible is here removed from the unique place in which it is put -- and rightly put -- in the standards of our Church. New exposures of truth, Dr. Speer says, are to be expected from Christ or from the New Testament or from the Holy Spirit. What boundless confusion is

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(1) "What is needed", Dr. Speer says, (p.41), "is that everywhere in all lands men should be set free from what is evil and bad and that human good should be built by God's help through Christ and His Gospel." What a difference there is between this teaching and Jesus' words to Nicodemus, "Ye must be born again"! Compare the beginning of Dr. Speer's book, "The Unfinished Task of Foreign Missions (1926), where, on pp. 10f., the use of human goodness - illustrated by Jerome K. Jerome's "Passing of the Third Floor Back" - is represented as being the method of Jesus!

#10.

is here, what woeful lack of clearness as to the very foundation of all missionary work! (1)

What is the missionary to say when he begins work on his field? Is he to appeal to a Christ in his own soul, is he to draw from his own experience for the content of his message, is he to place the treasures which he finds in the New Testament alongside of other treasures which he finds in Christ or in the Holy Spirit? If he does so, he has deserted the basis upon which all the teaching of our Church rests -- namely, the authority of the blessed written Word of God.

Very different should be the attitude of the true missionary of the Cross. His function is a humbler function, and yet a function which in its humility may prove to be the most glorious function of all. His function is not to draw upon mystical experience of his own for the content of his message, but simply to set forth what is taught in God's Word -- both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament, both in the words of Jesus in the Gospels and in the words of the Holy Spirit in the Epistles of Paul. The function of the true missionary is simply to open the pages of the Holy Book and say: "Thus saith the Lord."

He cannot, indeed, do that with any power unless he has received the message in his own heart, unless he knows in his own soul the living Saviour whom the Scriptures present. The Holy Spirit must illumine for him the sacred page. But the content of his message will be based upon the Bible and upon the Bible alone.

When the message is based upon the Bible alone, the content of the message will be very different from that which now is heard. Gone will be all vagueness like the vagueness of Dr. Speer's little book. Instead, there will stand out the great verities which the Church is commissioned to set forth -- the awful holiness of God, the deadly guilt and power of sin, the true deity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, His virgin birth, His mighty miracles, His obedience to the law, His righteousness with which believers are clothed, His sacrifice to satisfy divine justice and reconcile us to God, His glorious resurrection in the body in which he suffered, His ascension into Heaven, the sending of the Holy Spirit, the utter powerlessness of man, the sovereign grace of God by which alone are made alive those who were dead in trespasses and sins, the new and right relation to God received only by those in whom the Holy Spirit has wrought faith, the new walk and conversation of those who have been received by God and made alive from the dead, the dread yet glorious hope of Christ's supernatural appearing in glory when He shall come to judge

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(1) Compare Dr. Speer's book "The New Opportunity of the Church", 1919, p. 44: "Deeper and more religious meanings than we have ever proclaimed are discerned in the Cross of Christ, revealed and illustrated in the war." Does Dr. Speer mean that these new "meanings" are deeper and more religious than those that are set forth in the fifth chapter of II Corinthians or in the eighth chapter of Romans? And have these Scriptural "meanings" never been proclaimed from New Testament times until the World War? Ah, how far are we here from the majestic simplicity of the gospel of the Cross!

#11.

the world.

A new and glorious day will it be for the distracted Church when that message again shall ring out clear, when there shall be a return from the imaginations of men's hearts to God's Holy Word. Meanwhile there are those who already love and honor that Word. What shall they do in the present day? Can they continue to support a mission agency that has wandered so far? There are many men and women in our Church who are raising that question. And they will raise it yet more earnestly if they read Dr. Speer's little book with care.

#### CONCLUSION

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What, then, evangelical Christians now do? Can they conscientiously continue their contributions to such a Board?

The question might seem to have been answered by what has already been said. But the answer is not really quite so simple as it seems. We ought never to forget that despite the attitude of the Board there are many faithful missionaries under the Board who are proclaiming the full gospel as it is set forth in the whole Word of God. Those faithful missionaries of the Cross should not be allowed to suffer because of the faults of the administrative agency under which they stand. Until some truly evangelical agency is formed to care for those faithful missionaries, evangelical people cannot withhold their support of the present Board.

But has the time not come for the establishment of a truly evangelical missionary agency in the Presbyterian Church -- an agency to which evangelical Christians can contribute, not with hesitation and distrust, but with all confidence and joy, an agency which shall keep clear of entangling alliances and shall proclaim the full glories of the Reformed Faith as they are found in the Word of God? The question may well be raised; it may well be commended to the prayerful consideration of that large body of Christian laymen in our Church who love their Bibles and the crucified Saviour set forth therein, who know that the "principles of Jesus" will never save the world -- nor what Dr. Speer calls his "redeeming life" (1) -- but only His precious redeeming blood, who are not seeking the patronizing testimony of non-Christian men, which Dr. Speer rehearses at such length, but who are willing to bear the offense of the Cross.

If such an evangelical agency is formed, its virtue must be not merely negative but positive; it must not only avoid denying the gospel, but it must preach the gospel in all its fullness and in all its power. One fundamental vice underlies the defense of the present Board; its representatives seem to think that the burden of proof is to be placed upon those who deny that the Board is sounding an evangelical note. "Be definite in your charges", they say in effect; "point out individual missionaries against whom charges of

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(1) The relation of the Foreign Missionary Enterprise to the World Situation of Today," in Christian Students and World Problems, 1924, p. 139.

#12.

heresy can be preferred, or else keep silent with your criticism and continue your support." What is the trouble with such a line of defense? Is it not that the defense is negative merely? The assumption seems to be that if the missionaries or the secretaries of the Board cannot be proved to be saying that which is contrary to the gospel of Christ, then all is well. But cannot these gentlemen really understand any better than that the point of view of evangelical Christians in our Church? Cannot they understand that what evangelical Christians demand is not an agency that avoids denying the gospel of the Cross of Christ, that perhaps pays perfunctory lip service to it on explicit demand, but an agency that is on fire with that gospel, that never for one moment keeps it in the background, that preaches it in season and out of season, that combats what is contradictory to it, that presents it as the only way of salvation for lost and dying men? If in answer to the present paper Dr. Speer should affirm his belief in the atonement of Christ -- that heart of the gospel which, so far as we have been able to observe, he has in his recent books dealt with only to bring it into connection with the death of soldiers in the war, or otherwise to explain it away -- if he should affirm his belief in the virgin birth of Christ, and in the other four basic elements of our faith to which the Auburn Affirmationists have done despite, if even he should affirm his conviction of the necessity of these beliefs, still our objections would not really be removed. What we long for is not a missionary agency that affirms belief in the essential things of the faith when asked to do so, but a missionary agency that proclaims those things joyously, spontaneously, and all the time. The difference here concerns the question where the really central emphasis is to be placed. It is not merely a difference of the mind, but a difference of the heart. What is the real impact of our Foreign Board upon the world? Is it the preaching of Christ crucified --not in some pale modern sense, not as a thing upon which new light is shed by the death of soldiers in the war, but as a blessed mystery revealed in the Word of God? If it is, then we can support that Board? But if not, we must seek some other agency that will proclaim this thing which to us is the breath of life. Christ has bought us with His own precious blood. Woe be to us if we proclaim, either by our words or by our gifts, some other gospel than the gospel of the Cross. And may God show us how we can best proclaim that gospel through the length and breadth of the world!

CAN EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANS SUPPORT OUR FOREIGN BOARD?

An Inquiry Presented for the Consideration  
of the Evangelical Members  
of the  
Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.

By

J. Gresham Machen

April, 1929

Every agency appealing for funds should be willing to give an account of its stewardship to those to whom it appeals. This principle applies to the Board of Foreign Missions of our Presbyterian Church. The Board is supported not by a tax levied on the members of the Church, but by voluntary contributions. If contributors think that their gifts are being devoted by the Board to the ends for the sake of which they have contributed them, then they will continue their support; otherwise they cannot reasonably be expected to do so.

There are some contributors who need have no hesitation about continuing their support of the Board. Those are the contributors that are interested in the social or material or educational aspects of the Board's work. It is perfectly clear that our Foreign Board is performing a valuable humanitarian service in many parts of the world, and those who want to contribute to such a humanitarian service may probably have confidence in this particular agency. But there are other contributors who may well have grave doubts as to whether they are justified in continuing their gifts. These are the contributors who are interested in propagating the gospel of Jesus Christ as it is contained in the whole Word of God. Can these Bible-loving and Bible-believing Christians conscientiously continue their support of our Foreign Board? About that question there is widespread doubt.



#2.

Obviously the question cannot possibly be answered by pronouncements of the General Assembly; for the distrust which evangelical Christians have with respect to the Board itself applies in equal measure to the Assembly. When, indeed, the issue between the Bible and modern unbelief is clearly presented, the Assembly usually stands on the side of the Bible; (1) repeated pronouncements have affirmed that the full truthfulness of Scripture, the virgin birth, the substitutionary atonement, the bodily resurrection, and the miracles of our Lord, (2) are essential doctrines of our Faith. But these pronouncements have been made, practically speaking, a dead letter by the fact that the machinery of the Church is almost altogether in the hands of those who are concealing the real gravity of the situation that exists. Evasive reports as to the state of the Church, like that of the Commission of Fifteen of 1925-1927, will hardly restore the confidence of evangelical Christians; on the contrary, they will in the end do more to destroy confidence than any open presentation of the facts could possibly do. If, therefore, the Foreign Board is to regain the lost confidence of evangelical Christians

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(1) The Assembly stood on the side of the Bible in the "Gantz case" in 1925. In 1927, in the judicial case concerning the licensure of candidates in the Presbytery of New York, it stood against the Bible and in favor of modern unbelief, but only because of the fact that the Moderator, Dr. Speer, quite illegally permitted the representatives of the Synod of New York, who were parties in interest, to vote in the case.

(2) See the pronouncement of the General Assembly of 1910 confirmed by that of 1923 (Minutes, 1923, p. 253).

#3.

in the Church, it cannot do so by any appeal to ecclesiastical committees, but can only do so by meeting squarely the objections of individual givers. These individual givers must still raise the question: "Can evangelical Christians conscientiously contribute to our Foreign Board?"

I shall not now attempt to answer that question in any comprehensive way; I shall not attempt any comprehensive examination of the work which the Board is carrying on in foreign lands; but shall merely refer to certain disquieting facts which have come under my immediate observation. Those disquieting facts concern, first, the treatment of candidates for the mission field and, second, the pronouncements of Dr. Robert E. Speer.

I.

With regard to the former subject, my position as professor in Princeton Theological Seminary has given me rather unusual opportunities for observation. I have been thrown into close spiritual contact with a large body of young men who graduate from our Seminary from year to year. These young men, of course, differ widely as to the clearness with which they have received into their minds and hearts the gospel of the Cross of Christ; and, in particular, they differ widely in the degree of bravery with which they are resolved to proclaim that gospel in the presence of the unbelief now rampant in the Church. But the large majority of them - indeed a proportion truly amazing in view of the hostile

#4.

forces now abroad in the world - have resolved to stand firmly for that gospel of the Cross, and firmly against the current indifferentism and unbelief.

Some of these men have cherished as the ambition of their lives the thought of going to the foreign mission field. At last the time approaches for the realization of their high resolve. They meet in conference with representatives of our Board of Foreign Missions. What impression is made by these conferences upon their minds? Are these young men commended for the clearness with which they recognize the insufficiency of all other ways of salvation save the Cross of Christ considered as a substitutionary death for our sins; are they warned against the deadly peril of making common cause with those who preach the "other gospel" of agnostic Modernism; are they encouraged to trust, not in ecclesiastical combinations of human influences, but simply and solely in the Spirit of God making use of the blessed gospel that the Scriptures contain; are they commended for their understanding of the distinctiveness of our Reformed Faith over against various subtractions from the full Scripture doctrine of the grace of God; are they confirmed in their sense of the high liberty of the Presbyterian minister whether at home or abroad? I can certainly, to say the least, find no clear evidence that such is the case. On the contrary, these young men, so far as I can judge by the spiritual effect on them, are given the impression that they are expected to conform to

#5.

the policy of church cooperation and union which the representatives of the Board favor, and that not separation from the non-Christian world, whether within or without the visible Church, but cooperation with those who differ from us is the crying need of the hour.

My impression with regard to this matter is strengthened by the official "Candidate Reference Blank" which I have received a number of times from the Board when information is requested regarding prospective missionaries. That reference blank includes among commendable qualities about whose possession by the candidate information is desired, such things as "tolerance of point of view of others", "desire to progress in spiritual truth", "sanity" (explained as "absence of tendency to extreme views"). Clearly a high mark with regard to these qualities is treated as being in the candidate's favor. No doubt there is a sense in which these questions can be answered in the affirmative even in the case of a man who is most clearly determined to be loyal to Christ and to be separate from the unbelieving world. But the trouble is that there are no other questions on this blank to determine whether the candidate is resolved not to tolerate the point of view of those who are opposed to the gospel of Christ as it is set forth in Holy Scripture, and whether he himself is clear in

#6.

his understanding of the great issue between supernaturalism and naturalism, between evangelical religion and non-doctrinal religion, which now faces the Church. There is, moreover, not one word to determine the candidate's intellectual attainments as over against his intellectual capacity; there is not one word to determine his knowledge of the contents of the gospel. Such a questionnaire, because of the choice of leading questions, creates very plainly the impression that "tolerance of opposing views" is far more valued by the Foreign Board than loyalty to the whole word of God.

The same impression is also created by the "Application Form" which the candidates themselves are asked to fill out. That form contains the following question (Section I, Question 17):

Does your experience justify the belief that you can cheerfully accept and support the decision of a majority, even if the decision is contrary to your own opinions?

It is difficult to see how any Christian man, certainly how any Protestant, can possibly answer such a question in the affirmative. The Rev. Lindsay S. B. Hadley, indeed, the Candidate Secretary of the Board, in his letter to me of March 8, 1928, distinguishes between "opinions" and "convictions":

This question, as I understand it, has nothing to do with a man's convictions, which naturally we, who are interested in Christian work, would expect a man to hold firmly throughout.

But in making this distinction between opinions and convictions,

#7.

Mr. Hadley seems to differ sharply from the form of government of our Church, where, in Chapter I, Section iv, it is said:

And that no opinion can be either more pernicious or more absurd, than that which brings truth and falsehood upon a level, and represents it as of no consequence what a man's opinions are (*italics mine*).

Here the word "opinion" seems clearly to be used in the sense in which Mr. Hadley uses the word "conviction". And surely, in this difference, the Form of Government and not Mr. Hadley is right. The man who does not share a certain view is always inclined to regard that view as an "opinion"; the man who does share it is inclined to regard it as a "conviction". "Opinion" and "conviction", therefore, from the point of view with which we are now concerned, are practically speaking synonymous terms. I still do not see, therefore, how any evangelical Christian, in this day of widespread defection from the faith, can possibly answer in the affirmative the question in the Application Form.

This impression is deepened by an examination of Section IV in the Application Form, which deals with "Religious Experience". That section is declared by the Candidate Secretary in the letter to which reference has already been made, to be "very definite". The secretary writes as follows:

#8.

This Question (Question 17 of Section I), as I understand it, has nothing to do with a man's convictions, which naturally we, who are interested in Christian work, would expect a man to hold firmly throughout. Such statements, however, would come on page 3 under "Religious Experience", which, as you will see are very definite. (italics mine).

Let us now turn to those statements which Mr. Hadley declared to be "very definite". The only questions in the sections which can by any chance be referred to are Questions 3,5,6. The last two of these read as follows:

5. Do you believe that in every form of mission work the paramount duty of every missionary is to make Jesus Christ known as Saviour, Lord, and Master?

6. Is it your purpose to make this the chief aim of your missionary career, no matter what special duties may be assigned to you?

Are these the questions which Mr. Hadley regards as "very definite"? Surely the adjective as applied to them is strangely misplaced; for the questions are utterly vague. All the terms used - "Saviour", "Lord" and "Master" - are used today in such widely diverse senses that the questions could be answered in the affirmative by men who from the point of view of the Bible and of evangelical Christians are unbelievers of a very thoroughgoing kind. That the Candidate Secretary of our Board of Foreign Missions should speak of such studiedly vague language as being "very definite" raises in very insistent fashion the question whether evangelical Christians can possibly continue

#9.

to contribute to such a Board.

This question becomes still more insistent when we examine the remaining one of the three questions to which reference has just been made. That question is Question 3. It reads as follows:

3. Have you any views which might prevent your harmonious cooperation with the missionaries of the Presbyterian Church?

This question must surely be taken in connection with Question 17 of Section I which has been quoted above. The candidate must have no views that prevent his harmonious cooperation with the missionaries of the Presbyterian Church, and he must be willing to submit his opinion to the majority vote of any group of such missionaries to which he may belong. It is surely a large promise; and we ought to consider carefully what it may involve. What may those "opinions" be which the candidate must, on occasion, be allowed to over-ride his own?

The impression has certainly been made upon some candidates that among the opinions which he is required to allow to over-ride his own are opinions like those which led to the formation of the United Church of Canada; the impression has clearly been made that former service in the Presbyterian Church of Canada (called by its enemies the "Continuing" Presbyterian Church) is to be regarded as a ground of suspicion when a candidate comes before the representatives of our Board.



#10.

Mr. Hadley says that that is not the case; yet in view of his correspondence with me I cannot see how any other impression could possibly have been produced. The whole impression is that the candidate must be ready on occasion to give up the Faith of our Church in accordance with a majority vote, as though he were merely changing a suit of clothes.

At any rate there is one set of "opinions" with which a missionary in these days can hardly avoid contact. It is the kind of opinion represented by the "Auburn Affirmation", which declares in perfectly plain language that the full truthfulness of Scripture, the virgin birth, the substitutionary atonement, the bodily resurrection and the miracle of our Lord are non-essential even for the ministers in our Church. The Affirmation has been signed by about thirteen hundred of our ministers, and unquestionably the point of view that it represents is shared by very large numbers of ministers who did not sign it. What guarantee has the candidate that such opinions are not represented on our mission field, and that it is not to such opinions that he is being asked by Question 17 to be willing to submit his own?

But it is not merely such general disquietude that suggests itself in this connection. For it is a fact - a fact which will come as a surprise and shock to many evangelical Christians throughout the Church, but still a fact all the same - that Mr. Hadley, the Candidate Secretary of our Foreign Board,

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is himself a signer of the Affirmation. This secretary who fills this peculiarly important position, who stands in this peculiarly intimate relation to the men who desire to devote themselves to foreign mission work, is a signer of a formal statement that is hostile not only to evangelical Christianity but to all Christianity at its very root.

The cancer of the Auburn Affirmation and what it represents, moreover, cuts far deeper into our Foreign Board than merely by the presence of an Affirmationist in the position of Candidate Secretary. No less than four among the fifteen ministerial members of the Board are signers of this notable anti-evangelical pronouncement. And what, in this situation, is the attitude of the staff, as distinguished from the governing members, of the Board? Dr. Robert E. Speer, surely, is qualified to give the answer. His answer is given in a letter which he sent to me, jointly with Dr. John A. Marquis of the Board of National Missions, on May 6, 1926:

First - all the members of the Boards of the Church were elected by the General Assembly. The Assembly clearly believed that they were loyal and faithful ministers and members of the Church. We know of not one who does not accept the Constitution and Standards of the Church and who is not truly and loyally evangelical.

At the time when that letter was written, no less than six out of fourteen ministerial members of the National Board and five out of fifteen ministerial members of the Foreign Board were

#12.

signers of the Auburn Affirmation. Yet all these gentlemen are regarded as "truly and loyally evangelical" by Dr. Marquis and Dr. Speer! What possible confidence can really consistent evangelical Christians have in Boards whose Standards of what is truly and loyally evangelical are such as that? What kind of mission work is it in which the full truthfulness of Holy Scripture, the virgin birth, the substitutionary atonement, the bodily resurrection and the miracles of our Lord are, all and severally, regarded as non-essential? Certainly it is a kind of mission work which no consistent evangelical Christian can support.

Is it such questions with regard to which candidates for the mission field are required to show "tolerance of the point of view of others"? The whole tendency, the whole attitude of the Candidate Department strongly creates such an impression. The question is not whether men who are lukewarm in their testimony against Modernism will be sent to the foreign field, but whether men who are faithful in their testimony, will be sent. One thing at least is clear: No real evangelical Christian, certainly no intelligent one, can possibly, without disloyalty to his Saviour and Lord, contribute to any mission work that is favorable to the point of view represented by the Auburn Affirmation. The Affirmation is hostile to repeated pronouncements of the General

#13.

Assembly. But that is not the serious objection to it. The really serious objection to it is that it is hostile to the Word of God.

## II.

A second cause of disquiet regarding the Foreign Board is found in the utterances of Dr. Robert E. Speer.

Among those utterances, one deserves special attention. It is the booklet, "Are Foreign Missions Done For?", which Dr. Speer has recently distributed widely in the Church. "This little book", says the preface, "is an attempt to meet fairly and honestly some of the present day questions which are raised with regard to the foreign missionary enterprise." The booklet has been widely distributed, and evidently it is intended by its author to be an apologia for the work of our Foreign Board. Here then, if anywhere, the evangelical Christian might fairly expect to obtain some sort of answer to the questions which he has felt obliged to raise.

Are such expectations satisfied? We are obliged to say very plainly that they are not. Far from setting forth any clearly evangelical position on the great specific questions that agitate the Church, Dr. Speer's book from beginning to end is dishearteningly evasive and vague.

This vagueness appears in most distressing form just when the author seems to suppose that what he says is

#14.

particularly clear. No less than twice in the course of the book Dr. Speer quotes an utterance made by a conference held at Princeton in 1920. <sup>(1)</sup> That utterance, he says, has "nothing uncertain or confused" about it; "it is definite and comprehensive"(p.56). The evangelical reader will naturally turn with high hopes to an utterance for which such claims are advanced. Surely, he will say, the utterance must set forth in no uncertain terms the authority of the written Word as over against the current mysticism that turns rather to Christian experience or Christ in the soul; surely it must declare the absolute necessity, for every missionary, of belief in the virgin birth of our Lord, in His bodily resurrection, in His substitutionary death as a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice, in His supernatural return, in the absolute necessity of the new birth as over against any development of human goodness, in justification by faith alone, in salvation by the sovereign grace of God.

Are such hopes realized? What is this evangelical utterance which Dr. Speer declares to be so comprehensive and so plain? The evangelical Christian may have difficulty in believing his eyes when he finds that the following is all that it is:

The supreme and controlling aim of foreign missions is to make the Lord Jesus Christ known to all men as their Divine Saviour and to persuade them to become His disciples; to gather these

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(1) Pp.56,81. In one other place, also, a practically identical declaration is quoted (p.64).

#15.

disciples into Christian churches which shall be self-propagating, self-supporting, and self-governing; to cooperate, so long as necessary, with these churches in the evangelizing of their countrymen and in bringing to bear on all human life the spirit and principles of Christ."

Such is the utterance which is declared to be so definite and so clear! No doubt it will seem clear to the agnostic Modernism that is rampant in our Church; for it is couched in just the vague, ambiguous language that modernism loves. All the terms, "Lord", "Divine Saviour", "disciples", and, alas, "Jesus Christ" - are used today in senses entirely alien to the Word of God; and the utterance ignores altogether the grand particularities of the Christian faith. The utterance speaks of "the spirit and principles of Christ"; but "spirit" is spelled with a small letter and the Third Person of the blessed Trinity is ignored; the utterance speaks of Jesus as Saviour, but there is nothing about the sin from which He saves or the Cross by which salvation was wrought; the utterance speaks of bringing to bear upon human life "the spirit and principles of Christ", but there is nothing about the necessity of the mysterious, regenerating work of God's Spirit, without which "the spirit and principles of Christ" (whatever they may be) are quite powerless to save men from wrath to come. In short, there is no hint here that the foreign missionary has a message to mankind lost in sin, that that message is contained solely in the Bible as the

#16.

Word of God, and that the heart and core of the message is found in redemption by the precious blood of Christ. Yet Dr. Speer says (p.81): "No better answer can be given to those who wish to know what our foreign missionaries conceive that they are about and how they are setting about it than to quote the more important of the Findings of this Conference". (1) We can only say that if this be the answer which our Foreign Board has to give regarding the content of the Christian message, then it is difficult to see how evangelical Christians can continue their support of the Board. So far as this declaration indicates, the Board may be propagating the vague "other gospel" of non-doctrinal Modernism just as probably as the blessed gospel that the Bible contains.

The vagueness that characterizes this utterance also characterizes the whole booklet of Dr. Speer. There is in it no mention of the virgin birth of our Lord and of the absolute necessity of belief in it for every missionary, no mention of the bodily resurrection, no mention of the full truthfulness of Scripture (indeed no mention of Scripture, as such, at all), no mention of the supernatural return of Christ, no mention of the new birth of believers, no mention of justification by faith, no mention of the atoning death of Christ? (2) What sort of gospel is it from which all

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(1) Then follows (pp.81-85) the paragraph quoted above and a fuller transcript of the findings of the Conference, which, however, does not really go beyond this paragraph so far as questions of principle are concerned.

(2) There is one bare mention of "the Crucified and ever Living Lord" (p.37).

#17.

that makes a gospel has thus been left out? In this vague message the offense of the Cross is done away, but so is the glory and the power.

In one thing, indeed, we agree heartily with Dr. Speer. We agree with him heartily in holding that foreign missions are not "done for"; we agree with him heartily in holding that the "missionary enterprise" is the greatest enterprise in all the world.

Some of the testimonies to which he appeals seem to us, indeed, very unconvincing. These are the testimonies of non-Christian men in mission countries - testimonies to the "moral and spiritual values" of Christianity, to the loftiness of Jesus' teaching and example, to the transforming power of His "principles". Sadness comes over us as we read Dr. Speer's rehearsal of such testimonies. Would they ever have been rendered if missionaries had been faithful in preaching the real Christ? The plain fact is that the real Christ advanced stupendous claims. Unless those claims are true, He is not a perfect ideal at all. He uttered a "hard saying"; and many of His former followers went back and walked no more with Him. Has that hard saying been kept in the background today, that Jesus might win this superficial and patronizing favor among those who have not been born again? Could that favor ever have been won if missionaries had put



#18.

Calvary in its proper place, if they had been willing to bear the offence of the Cross? Such questions do arise in our minds when we read Dr. Speer's enthusiastic words about the permeation of the nations with Christian principles and the Christian "spirit".

We do not, indeed, undervalue a good testimony to Christian living by those who are without. How often in recent years has such testimony been wrung from unwilling lips by those who amid the fires of persecution have been true to Jesus Christ! Still, the message of the Cross, when it is faithfully presented, is a very offensive thing. It is to the Jews a stumbling block, to the Greeks foolishness. When the offence of it is avoided, we are inclined to doubt the faithfulness of the preaching. God grant that the Church, both at home and abroad, may never be ashamed of the offence of the Cross!

But if we differ from Dr. Speer in the arguments by which we defend foreign missions, we agree with him with all our soul in the conclusion. We agree with him in holding that foreign missions are the only hope of the world. Indeed, far more poignant is our sense of the need of foreign missions than is his. For we do not share his favorable view of  
(1)  
human nature; the primary fact, we hold, is that mankind

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(1) "What is needed" Dr. Speer says (p.41), "is that everywhere in all lands man should be set free from what is evil and bad and that human good should be built by God's help through Christ and His Gospel." What a difference there is between this teaching and Jesus' words to Nicodemus: "Ye must be born again"! Compare the beginning of Dr. Speer's book, "The unfinished Task of Foreign Missions (1926), where, on pp. 10f., the use of human goodness - illustrated by Jerome K. Jerome's "Passing of the Third Floor Back"-is represented as being the method of Jesus!

#19.

everywhere is lost in sin. We cannot keep that fact in the background as Dr. Speer does. It and it alone constitutes the really profound need of the world. How great then is the obligation to preach the one message that will save lost sinners and bring them into peace with God!

But where is that message to be found? Where are missionaries to find the message that they shall proclaim throughout the world? That is surely a basic question. Yet no clear answer to it can be found in Dr. Speer's book - - certainly not the true answer. Dr. Speer speaks of "the search for the infinite riches of God in Christ" (p.37), "a quest for an ever enlarging understanding of the fulness of Christ" (ibid.); but nowhere does he speak of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as being the true source of the missionary message. He hopes for "some exposure of treasures in Christ or in the New Testament or in the Holy Spirit which have been hidden as yet". (p.46). We cannot help feeling that the Bible is here removed from the unique place in which it is put -- and rightly put -- in the Standards of our Church. New exposures of truth, Dr. Speer says, are to be expected from Christ or from the New Testament or from the Holy Spirit. What boundless confusion is here, what woeful lack of clearness as to  
(1)  
the very foundation of all missionary work!

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(1) Compare Dr. Speer's book "The New Opportunity of the Church", 1919, p.44: "Deeper and more religious meanings than we have ever proclaimed are discerned in the Cross of Christ, revealed, and illustrated in the war." Does Dr. Speer mean that these new "meanings" are deeper and more religious than those that are set forth in the fifth chapter of II Corinthians or in the eighth chapter of Romans? And have these Scriptural "meanings" never been proclaimed from New Testament times until the World War? Ah, how far are we here from the majestic simplicity of the gospel of the Cross!

What is the missionary to say when he begins work on his field? Is he to appeal to a Christ in his own soul, is he to draw from his own experience for the content of his message, is he to place the treasures which he finds in the New Testament alongside of other treasures which he finds in Christ or in the Holy Spirit? If he does so, he has deserted the basis upon which all the teaching of our Church rests -- namely, the authority of the blessed written word of God.

Very different should be the attitude of the true missionary of the Cross. His function is a humbler function, and yet a function which in its humility may prove to be the most glorious function of all. His function is not to draw upon mystical experiences of his own for the content of his message, but simply to set forth what is taught in God's Word -- both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament, both in the words of Jesus in the Gospels and in the words of the Holy Spirit in the Epistles of Paul. The function of the true missionary is simply to open the pages of the Holy Book and say: "Thus saith the Lord."

He cannot, indeed, do that with any power unless he has received the message in his own heart, unless he knows in his own soul the living Saviour whom the Scriptures present. The Holy Spirit must illumine for him the sacred page. But the content of his message will be based upon the Bible and upon the Bible alone.

When the message is based upon the Bible alone, the content of the message will be very different from that which now is

#21.

heard. Gone will be all vagueness like the vagueness of Dr. Speer's little book. Instead, there will stand out the great verities which the Church is commissioned to set forth -- the awful holiness of God, the deadly guilt and power of sin, the true deity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, His virgin birth, His mighty miracles, His obedience to the law, His righteousness with which believers are clothed, His sacrifice to satisfy divine justice and reconcile us to God. His glorious resurrection in the body in which he suffered, His ascension into Heaven, the sending of the Holy Spirit, the utter powerlessness of man, the sovereign grace of God by which alone are made alive those who were dead in trespasses and sins, the new and right relation to God received only by those in whom the Holy Spirit has wrought faith, the new walk and conversation of those who have been received by God and made alive from the dead, the dread yet glorious hope of Christ's supernatural appearing in glory when He shall come to judge the world.

A new and glorious day will it be for a distracted Church when that message again shall ring out clear, when there shall be a return from the imaginations of men's hearts to God's holy Word. Meanwhile there are those who already love and honor that Word. What shall they do in the present day? Can they continue to support a mission agency that has wandered so far? There are many men and women in our Church who are raising that question. And they will raise it yet more earnestly if they read Dr. Speer's little book with care.

What, then, should evangelical Christians now do? Can they conscientiously continue their contributions to such a Board?

The question might seem to have been answered by what has already been said. But the answer is not really quite so simple as it seems. We ought never to forget that despite the attitude of the Board there are many faithful missionaries under the Board who are proclaiming the full gospel as it is set forth in the whole Word of God. Those faithful missionaries of the Cross should not be allowed to suffer because of the faults of the administrative agency under which they stand. Until some truly evangelical agency is formed to care for those faithful missionaries, evangelical people cannot withhold their support of the present Board.

But has the time not come for the establishment of a truly evangelical missionary agency in the Presbyterian Church -- an agency to which evangelical Christians can contribute, not with hesitation and distrust, but with all confidence and joy, an agency which shall keep clear of entangling alliances and shall proclaim the full glories of the Reformed Faith as they are found in the Word of God? The question may well be raised; it may well be commended to the prayerful consideration of that large body of Christian laymen in our Church who love their Bibles and the crucified Saviour set forth therein, who know that the "principles of Jesus" will never save the world -- nor what Dr. Speer calls His "redeeming life"<sup>(1)</sup> -- but only His precious redeeming blood,

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(1) The Relation of the Foreign Missionary Enterprise to the World Situation Today," in Christian Students and World Problems, 1924, p. 139.

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who are not seeking the patronizing testimony of non-Christian men, which Dr. Speer rehearses at such length, but who are willing to bear the offence of the Cross.

If such an evangelical agency is formed, its virtues must be not merely negative but positive; it must not only avoid denying the gospel, but it must preach the gospel in all its fullness and in all its power. One fundamental vice underlies the defence of the present Board; its representatives seem to think that the burden of proof is to be placed upon those who deny that the Board is sounding an evangelical note. "Be definite in your charges", they say in effect; "point out individual missionaries against whom charges of heresy can be preferred, or else keep silent with your criticism and continue your support." What is the trouble with such a line of defence? Is it not that the defence is negative merely? The assumption seems to be that if the missionaries or the secretaries of the Board cannot be proved to be saying that which is contrary to the gospel of Christ, then all is well. But cannot these gentlemen really understand any better than that the point of view of evangelical Christians in our Church? Cannot they understand that what evangelical Christians demand is not an agency that avoids denying the gospel of the Cross of Christ, that perhaps pays perfunctory lip service to it on explicit demand, but an agency that is on fire with that gospel, that never for one moment keeps it in the background, that preaches it in season and out of season, that combats what is contradictory to it, that presents it as the only way of salvation for lost and

#24.

dying men? If in answer to the present paper Dr. Speer should affirm his belief in the atonement of Christ -- that heart of the gospel which, so far as we have been able to observe, he has in his recent books dealt with only to bring it into connection with the death of soldiers in the war, or otherwise to explain it away -- if he should affirm his belief in the virgin birth of Christ, and in the other four basic elements of our faith to which the Auburn Affirmationists have done despite, if even he should affirm his conviction of the necessity of these beliefs, still our objections would not really be removed. What we long for is not a missionary agency that affirms belief in the essential things of the faith when asked to do so, but a missionary agency that proclaims those things joyously, spontaneously, and all the time. The difference here concerns the question where the really central emphasis is to be placed. It is not merely a difference of the mind, but a difference of the heart. What is the real impact of our Foreign Board upon the world? Is it the preaching of Christ crucified -- not in some pale modern sense, not as a thing upon which new light is shed by the death of soldiers in the war, but as a blessed mystery revealed in the Word of God? If it is, then we can support that Board? But if not, we must seek some other agency that will proclaim this thing which to us is the breath of life. Christ has bought us with His own precious blood. Woe be to us if we proclaim, either by our words or by our gifts, some other gospel than the gospel of the Cross. And may God show us how we can best proclaim that gospel through the length and breadth of the world!

#24.

dying men? If in answer to the present paper Dr. Speer should affirm his belief in the atonement of Christ -- that heart of the gospel which, so far as we have been able to observe, he has in his recent books dealt with only to bring it into connection with the death of soldiers in the war, or otherwise to explain it away -- if he should affirm his belief in the virgin birth of Christ, and in the other four basic elements of our faith to which the Auburn Affirmationists have done despite, if even he should affirm his conviction of the necessity of these beliefs, still our objections would not really be removed. What we long for is not a missionary agency that affirms belief in the essential things of the faith when asked to do so, but a missionary agency that proclaims those things joyously, spontaneously, and all the time. The difference here concerns the question where the really central emphasis is to be placed. It is not merely a difference of the mind, but a difference of the heart. What is the real impact of our Foreign Board upon the world? Is it the preaching of Christ crucified -- not in some pale modern sense, not as a thing upon which new light is shed by the death of soldiers in the war, but as a blessed mystery revealed in the Word of God? If it is, then we can support that Board? But if not, we must seek some other agency that will proclaim this thing which to us is the breath of life. Christ has bought us with His own precious blood. Woe be to us if we proclaim, either by our words or by our gifts, some other gospel than the gospel of the Cross. And may God show us how we can best proclaim that gospel through the length and breadth of the world!



CAN EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANS SUPPORT OUR FOREIGN BOARD?

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An Inquiry Presented for the Consideration  
of the Evangelical Members  
of the  
Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.

By

J. Gresham Machen

April 1929

Every agency appealing for funds should be willing to give an account of its stewardship to those to whom it appeals. This principle applies to the Board of Foreign Missions of our Presbyterian Church. The Board is supported not by a tax levied on the members of the Church, but by voluntary contributions. If contributors think that their gifts are being devoted by the Board to the ends for the sake of which they have contributed them, then they will continue their support; otherwise they cannot reasonably be expected to do so.

There are some contributors who need have no hesitation about continuing their support of the Board. These are the contributors that are interested in the social or material or educational aspects of the Board's work. It is perfectly clear that our Foreign Board is performing a valuable humanitarian service in many parts of the world, and those who want to contribute to such a humanitarian service may probably have confidence in this particular agency. But there are other contributors who may well have grave doubts as to whether they are justified in continuing their gifts. These are the contributors who are interested in propagating the gospel of Jesus Christ as it is contained in the whole Word of God. Can these Bible-loving and Bible-believing Christians conscientiously continue their support of our Foreign Board?

Obviously the question cannot possibly be answered by pronouncements of the General Assembly; for the distrust which evangelical Christians have with respect to the Board itself applies in equal measure to the Assembly. When, indeed, the issue between the Bible and modern belief is clearly presented, the Assembly usually stands on the side of the Bible; <sup>(1)</sup> repeated pronouncements have affirmed that the full truthfulness of Scripture, the virgin birth, the substitutionary atonement, the bodily resurrection, and the miracles of our Lord, are essential doctrines of our Faith <sup>(2)</sup>. But these pronouncements have been made, practically speaking, a dead letter by the fact that the machinery of the Church is almost altogether in the hands of those who are concealing the real gravity of the situation that exists. Evasive reports as to the state of the Church, like that of the Commission of Fifteen of 1925-1927, will hardly restore the confidence of evangelical Christians; on the contrary, they will in the end do more to destroy confidence than any open presentation of the facts could possibly do. If, therefore, the Foreign Board is to regain the lost confidence of evangelical Christians in the Church, it cannot do so by any appeal to ecclesiastical

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(1) The Assembly stood on the side of the Bible in the "Gantz case" in 1925. In 1927, in the judicial case concerning the licensure of candidates in the Presbytery of New York, it stood against the Bible and in favor of modern unbelief, but only because of the fact that the Moderator, Dr. Speer, quite illegally permitted the representatives of the Synod of New York, who were parties in interest, to vote in the case.

(2) See the pronouncement of the General Assembly of 1910 confirmed by that of 1923 (Minutes, 1923, p. 253).

committees, but can only do so by meeting squarely the objections of individual givers. These individual givers must still raise the question: "Can evangelical Christians conscientiously contribute to our Foreign Board?"

I shall not now attempt to answer that question in any comprehensive way; I shall not attempt any comprehensive examination of the work which the Board is carrying on in foreign lands; but shall merely refer to certain disquieting facts which have come under my immediate observation. Those disquieting facts concern, first, the treatment of candidates for the mission field and, second, the pronouncements of Dr. Robert E. Speer.

### I.

With regard to the former subject, my position as professor in Princeton Theological Seminary has given me rather unusual opportunities for observation. I have been thrown into close spiritual contact with a large body of young men who graduate from our seminary from year to year. These young men, of course, differ widely as to the clearness with which they have received into their minds and hearts the gospel of the Cross of Christ; and, in particular, they differ widely in the degree of bravery with which they are resolved to proclaim that gospel in the presence of the unbelief now rampant in the Church. But the large majority of them - indeed a proportion truly amazing in view of the hostile forces now abroad in the world - have resolved to stand firmly for that gospel of the Cross, and firmly against the current indifferentism and unbelief.

Some of these men have cherished as the ambition of their lives the thought of going to the foreign mission field. At last the time approaches for the realization of their high resolve. They meet in conference with representatives of our Board of Foreign Missions. What impression is made by these conferences upon their minds? Are these young men commended for the clearness with which they recognize the insufficiency of all other ways of salvation save the Cross of Christ considered as a substitutionary death for our sins; are they warned against the deadly peril of making common cause with those who preach the "other gospel" of agnostic Modernism; are they encouraged to trust, not in ecclesiastical combinations of human influences, but simply and solely in the Spirit of God making use of the blessed gospel that the Scriptures contain; are they commended for their understanding of the distinctiveness of our Reformed Faith over against various subtractions from the full Scripture doctrine of the grace of God; are they confirmed in their sense of the high liberty of the Presbyterian minister whether at home or abroad? I can certainly, to say the least, find no clear evidence that such is the case. On the contrary, these young men, so far as I can judge by the spiritual effect on them, are given the impression that they are expected to conform to the policy of church cooperation and union which the representatives of the Board favor, and that not separation from the non-Christian world, whether within or without the visible Church, but cooperation with those who differ from us is the crying need of the hour.

My impression with regard to this matter is strengthened by the

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official "Candidate Reference Blank" which I have received a number of times from the Board when information is requested regarding prospective missionaries. The reference blank includes among commendable qualities about whose possession by the candidate information is desired, such things as "tolerance of point of view of others", "desire to progress in spiritual truth," "sanity" (explained as "absence of tendency to extreme views"). Clearly a high mark with regard to these qualities is treated as being in the candidate's favor. No doubt there is a sense in which these questions can be answered in the affirmative even in the case of a man who is most clearly determined to be loyal to Christ and to be separate from the unbelieving world. But the trouble is that there are no other questions on this blank to determine whether the candidate is resolved not to tolerate the point of view of those who are opposed to the gospel of Christ as it is set forth in Holy Scripture, and whether he himself is clear in his understanding of the great issue between supernaturalism and naturalism, between evangelical religion and non-doctrinal religion, which now faces the Church. There is, moreover, not one word to determine the candidate's intellectual attainments as over against his intellectual capacity; there is not one word to determine his knowledge of the contents of the gospel. Such a questionnaire, because of the choice of leading questions, creates very plainly the impression that "tolerance of opposing views" is far more valued by the Foreign Board than loyalty to the whole Word of God.

The same impression is also created by the "Application Form" which the candidates themselves are asked to fill out. That form contains the following question "Section I, Question 17):

Does your experience justify the belief that you can cheerfully accept and support the decision of a majority, even if the decision is contrary to your own opinions?

It is difficult to see how any Christian man, certainly how any Protestant, can possibly answer such a question in the affirmative. The Rev. Lindsay S.B. Hadley, indeed, the Candidate Secretary of the Board, in his letter to me of March 8, 1928, distinguishes between "opinions" and "convictions":

This question, as I understand it, has nothing to do with a man's convictions, which naturally we, who are interested in Christian work, would expect a man to hold firmly throughout.

But in making this distinction between opinions and convictions, Mr. Hadley seems to differ sharply from the Form of Government of our Church, where in Chapter I, Section iv, it is said:

And that no opinion can be either more pernicious or more absurd, than that which brings truth and falsehood upon a level, and represents it as of no consequence what a man's opinions are (*italics mine*).

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Here the word "opinion" seems clearly to be used in the sense in which Mr. Hadley uses the word "conviction". And surely, in this difference, the Form of Government and not Mr. Hadley is right. The man who does not share a certain view is always inclined to regard that view as an "opinion"; the man who does share it is inclined to regard it as a "conviction". "Opinion" and "conviction", therefore, from the point of view with which we are now concerned, are practically speaking synonymous terms. I still do not see, therefore, how any evangelical Christian, in this day of widespread defection from the faith, can possibly answer in the affirmative the question in the Application Form.

This impression is deepened by an examination of Section IV in the Application Form, which deals with "Religious Experience". That section is declared by the Candidate Secretary in the letter to which reference has already been made, to be "very definite". The secretary writes as follows:

This question (question 17 of Section I) as I understand it, has nothing to do with a man's convictions, which naturally we, who are interested in Christian work, would expect a man to hold firmly throughout. Such statements, however, would come on page 3 under "Religious Experience", which, as you will see are very definite (italics mine).

Let us now turn to those statements which Mr. Hadley declared to be "very definite". The only questions in the section which can by any chance be referred to are questions 3,5,6. The last two of these read as follows:

5. Do you believe that in every form of mission work the paramount duty of every missionary is to make Jesus Christ known as Saviour, Lord, and Master?
6. Is it your purpose to make this the chief aim of your missionary career, no matter what special duties may be assigned to you?

Are these the questions which Mr. Hadley regards as "very definite"? Surely the adjective as applied to them is strangely misplaced; for the questions are utterly vague. All the terms used - "Saviour", "Lord" and "Master" - are used today in such widely diverse senses that the questions could be answered in the affirmative by men who from the point of view of the Bible and of evangelical Christians are unbelievers of a very thoroughgoing kind. That the Candidate Secretary of our Foreign Missions should speak of such studiedly vague language as being "very definite" raises in very insistent fashion the question whether evangelical Christians can possibly continue to contribute to such a Board.

This question becomes still more insistent when we examine the remaining one of the three questions to which reference has just been made.

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That question is Question 3. It reads as follows:

3. Have you any views which might prevent your harmonious cooperation with the missionaries of the Presbyterian Church?

This question must surely be taken in connection with Question 17 of Section I which has been quoted above. The candidate must have no views that prevent his harmonious cooperation with the missionaries of the Presbyterian Church, and he must be willing to submit his opinion to the majority vote of any group of such missionaries to which he may belong. It is surely a large promise; and we ought to consider carefully what it may involve. What may those "opinions" be which the candidate must, on occasion, be allowed to override his own?

The impression has certainly been made upon some candidates that among the opinions which he is required to allow to over-ride his own are opinions like those which led to the formation of the United Church of Canada; the impression has clearly been made that former service in the Presbyterian Church of Canada (called by its enemies the "Continuing Presbyterian Church") is to be regarded as a ground of suspicion when a candidate comes before the representatives of our Board. Mr. Hadley says that that is not the case; yet in view of his correspondence with me I cannot see how any other impression could possibly have been produced. The whole impression is that the candidate must be ready on occasion to give up the Faith of our Church in accordance with a majority vote, as though he were merely changing a suit of clothes.

At any rate there is one set of "opinions" with which a missionary in these days can hardly avoid contact. It is the kind of opinion represented by the "Auburn Affirmation", which declares in perfectly plain language that the full truthfulness of Scripture, the virgin birth, the substitutionary atonement, the bodily resurrection and the miracles of our Lord are non-essential even for the ministers in our Church. The Affirmation has been signed by about thirteen hundred of our ministers, and unquestionably the point of view that it represents is shared by very large numbers of ministers who did not sign it. What guarantee has the candidate that such opinions are not represented on our mission field, and that it is not to such opinions that he is being asked by question 17 to be willing to submit his own?

But it is not merely such general disquietude that suggests itself in this connection. For it is a fact - a fact which will come as a surprise and shock to many evangelical Christians throughout the Church, but still a fact all the same - that Mr. Hadley, the Candidate Secretary of our Foreign Board, is himself a signer of the Affirmation. This Secretary, who fills this peculiarly important position, who stands in this peculiarly intimate relation to the men who desire to devote themselves to foreign mission work, is a signer of a formal statement that is hostile not only to evangelical Christianity but to all Christianity at its very root.

The cancer of the Auburn Affirmation and what it represents, moreover, cuts far deeper into our Foreign Board than merely by the presence of an

tributed widely in the Church. "This little book", says the preface, "is an attempt to meet fairly and honestly some of the present day questions which are raised with regard to the foreign missionary enterprise." The booklet has been widely distributed, and evidently it is intended by its author to be an apologia for the work of our Foreign Board. Here then, if anywhere, the evangelical Christian might fairly expect to obtain some sort of answer to the questions which he has felt obliged to raise.

Are such expectations satisfied? We are obliged to say very plainly that they are not. Far from setting forth any clearly evangelical position on the great specific questions that agitate the Church, Dr. Speer's book from beginning to end is dishearteningly evasive and vague.

This vagueness appears in most distressing form just when the author seems to suppose that what he says is particularly clear. No less than twice in the course of the book Dr. Speer quotes an utterance made by a conference held at Princeton in 1920 (1). That utterance, he says has "nothing uncertain or confused" about it; "it is definite and comprehensive" (p.56). The evangelical reader will naturally turn with high hopes to an utterance for which such claims are advanced. Surely, he will say, the utterance must set forth in no uncertain terms the authority of the written Word as over against the current mysticism that turns rather to Christian experience or Christ in the soul; surely it must declare the absolute necessity, for every missionary, of belief in the virgin birth of our Lord, in His bodily resurrection, in His substitutionary death as a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice, in His supernatural return, in the absolute necessity of the new birth as over against any development of human goodness, in justification by faith alone, in salvation by the sovereign grace of God.

Are such hopes realized? What is this evangelical utterance which Dr. Speer declares to be so comprehensive and so plain? The evangelical Christian may have difficulty in believing his eyes when he finds that the following is all that it is:

"The supreme and controlling aim of foreign missions is to make the Lord Jesus Christ known to all men as their Divine Saviour and to persuade them to become His disciples; to gather these disciples into Christian churches which shall be self-propagating, self-supporting, and self-governing; to cooperate, so long as necessary, with these churches in the evangelizing of their countrymen and in bringing to bear on all human life the spirit and principles of Christ."

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(1) Pp. 56, 81. In one other place, also, a practically identical declaration is quoted. (p. 64).

Such is the utterance which is declared to be so definite and so clear! No doubt it will seem clear to the agnostic Modernism that is rampant in our Church; for it is couched in just the vague, ambiguous language that Modernism loves. All the terms - "Lord", "Divine Saviour", "disciples", and, alas, "Jesus Christ" - are used today in senses entirely alien to the Word of God; and the utterance ignores altogether the grand particularities of the Christian faith. The utterance speaks of "the spirit and principles of Christ"; but "spirit" is spelled with a small letter and the Third Person of the blessed Trinity is ignored; the utterance speaks of Jesus as Saviour, but there is nothing about the sin from which He saves or the Cross by which salvation was wrought; the utterance speaks of bringing to bear upon human life "the spirit and principles of Christ", but there is nothing about the necessity of the mysterious, regenerating work of God's Spirit, without which "the spirit and principles of Christ" (whatever they may be) are quite powerless to save men from wrath to come. In short, there is no hint here that the foreign missionary has a message to mankind lost in sin, that that message is contained solely in the Bible as the word of God, and that the heart and core of the message is found in redemption by the precious blood of Christ. Yet Dr. Speer says (p.81): "No better answer can be given to those who wish to know what our foreign missionaries conceive that they are about and how they are setting about it than to quote the more important of the Findings of this Conference".<sup>(1)</sup> We can only say that if this be the answer which our Foreign Board has to give regarding the content of the Christian message, then it is difficult to see how evangelical Christians can continue their support of the Board. So far as this declaration indicates, the Board may be propagating the vague "other gospel" of non-doctrinal Modernism just as probably as the blessed gospel that the Bible contains.

The vagueness that characterizes this utterance also characterizes the whole booklet of Dr. Speer. There is in it no mention of the virgin birth of our Lord and of the absolute necessity of belief in it for every missionary, no mention of the bodily resurrection, no mention of the full truthfulness of Scripture (indeed no mention of Scripture, as such, at all), no mention of the supernatural return of Christ, no mention of the new birth of believers, no mention of justification by faith, no mention of the atoning death of Christ?<sup>(2)</sup> What sort of gospel is it from which all that makes a gospel has thus been left out? In this vague message the offense of the Cross is done away, but so is the glory and the power.

Some of the testimonies to which he appeals seem to us, indeed, very unconvincing. There are the testimonies of non-Christian men in mission countries - testimonies to the "moral and spiritual values" of Christianity, to the loftiness of Jesus' teaching and example, to the transforming power of His "principles." Sadness comes over us as we read Dr. Speer's rehearsal of such testimonies. Would they ever have been rendered if missionaries had been faithful in preaching the real Christ? The plain fact is that the real Christ advanced stupendous claims. Unless those claims are true, He is not a perfect

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(1) Then follows (pp.81-85) the paragraph quoted above and a fuller transcript of the findings of the Conference, which, however, does not really go beyond this paragraph so far as questions of principles are concerned.

(2) There is one bare mention of "the Crucified and ever Living Lord". (p.37).



ideal at all. He uttered a "hard saying"; and many of His former followers went back and walked no more with Him. Has that hard saying been kept in the background today, that Jesus might win this superficial and patronizing favor among those who have not been born again? Could that favor ever have been won if missionaries had put Calvary in its proper place, if they had been willing to bear the offense of the Cross? Such questions do arise in our minds when we read Dr. Speer's enthusiastic words about the permeation of the nations with Christian principles and the Christian "spirit".

We do not, indeed, undervalue a good testimony to Christian living by those who are without. How often in recent years has such testimony been wrung from unwilling lips by those who amid the fires of persecution have been true to Jesus Christ! Still, the message of the Cross, when it is faithfully presented, is a very offensive thing. It is to the Jews a stumbling block, to the Greeks foolishness. When the offense of it is avoided, we are inclined to doubt the faithfulness of the preaching. God grant that the Church, both at home and abroad, may never be ashamed of the offense of the Cross!

But if we differ from Dr. Speer in the arguments by which we defend foreign missions, we agree with him with all our souls in the conclusion. We agree with him in holding that foreign missions are the only hope of the world. Indeed far more poignant is our sense of the need of foreign missions than is his. For we do not share his favorable view of human nature (1); the primary fact, we hold, is that mankind everywhere is lost in sin. We cannot keep that fact in the background as Dr. Speer does. It and it alone constitutes the really profound need of the world. How great then is the obligation to preach the one message that will save lost sinners and bring them into peace with God!

But where is that message to be found? Where are missionaries to find the message that they shall proclaim throughout the world? That is surely a basic question. Yet no clear answer to it can be found in Dr. Speer's book -- certainly not the true answer. Dr. Speer speaks of "the search for the infinite riches of God in Christ" (p.37), "a quest for an ever enlarging understanding of the fulness of Christ" (ibid.); but nowhere does he speak of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as being the true source of the missionary message. He hopes for "some exposure of treasures in Christ or in the New Testament or in the Holy Spirit which have been hidden as yet". (p.46) We cannot help feeling that the Bible is here removed from the unique place in which it is put -- and rightly put -- in the standards of our Church. New exposures of truth, Dr. Speer says, are to be expected from Christ or from the New Testament or from the Holy Spirit. What boundless confusion is

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(1) "What is needed", Dr. Speer says, (p.41), "is that everywhere in all lands men should be set free from what is evil and bad and that human good should be built by God's help through Christ and His Gospel." What a difference there is between this teaching and Jesus' words to Nicodemus: "Ye must be born again"! Compare the beginning of Dr. Speer's book, "The Unfinished Task of Foreign Missions (1926), where, on pp. 10f., the use of human goodness - illustrated by Jerome K. Jerome's "Passing of the Third Floor Back" - is represented as being the method of Jesus!

#10.

is here, what woeful lack of clearness as to the very foundation of all missionary work: (1)

What is the missionary to say when he begins work on his field? Is he to appeal to a Christ in his own soul, is he to draw from his own experience for the content of his message, is he to place the treasures which he finds in the New Testament alongside of other treasures which he finds in Christ or in the Holy Spirit? If he does so, he has deserted the basis upon which all the teaching of our Church rests -- namely, the authority of the blessed written Word of God.

Very different should be the attitude of the true missionary of the Cross. His function is a humbler function, and yet a function which in its humility may prove to be the most glorious function of all. His function is not to draw upon mystical experience of his own for the content of his message, but simply to set forth what is taught in God's Word -- both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament, both in the words of Jesus in the Gospels and in the words of the Holy Spirit in the Epistles of Paul. The function of the true missionary is simply to open the pages of the Holy Book and say: "Thus saith the Lord."

He cannot, indeed, do that with any power unless he has received the message in his own heart, unless he knows in his own soul the living Saviour whom the Scriptures present. The Holy Spirit must illumine for him the sacred page. But the content of his message will be based upon the Bible and upon the Bible alone.

When the message is based upon the Bible alone, the content of the message will be very different from that which now is heard. Gone will be all vagueness like the vagueness of Dr. Speer's little book. Instead, there will stand out the great verities which the Church is commissioned to set forth -- the awful holiness of God, the deadly guilt and power of sin, the true deity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, His virgin birth, His mighty miracles, His obedience to the Law, His righteousness with which believers are clothed, His sacrifice to satisfy divine justice and reconcile us to God, His glorious resurrection in the body in which he suffered, His ascension into Heaven, the sending of the Holy Spirit, the utter powerlessness of man, the sovereign grace of God by which alone are made alive those who were dead in trespasses and sins, the new and right relation to God received only by those in whom the Holy Spirit has wrought faith, the new walk and conversation of those who have been received by God and made alive from the dead, the dread yet glorious hope of Christ's supernatural appearing in glory when He shall come to judge

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(1) Compare Dr. Speer's book "The New Opportunity of the Church", 1919, p. 44: "Deeper and more religious meanings than we have ever proclaimed are discerned in the Cross of Christ, revealed and illustrated in the war." Does Dr. Speer mean that these new "meanings" are deeper and more religious than those that are set forth in the fifth chapter of II Corinthians or in the eighth chapter of Romans? And have these Scriptural "meanings" never been proclaimed from New Testament times until the World War? Ah, how far are we here from the majestic simplicity of the gospel of the Cross!

#11.

the world.

A new and glorious day will it be for the distracted Church when that message again shall ring out clear, when there shall be a return from the imaginations of men's hearts to God's Holy Word. Meanwhile there are those who already love and honor that Word. What shall they do in the present day? Can they continue to support a mission agency that has wandered so far? There are many men and women in our Church who are raising that question. And they will raise it yet more earnestly if they read Dr. Speer's little book with care.

#### CONCLUSION

What, then, <sup>should</sup> evangelical Christians now do? Can they conscientiously continue their contributions to such a Board?

The question might seem to have been answered by what has already been said. But the answer is not really quite so simple as it seems. We ought never to forget that despite the attitude of the Board there are many faithful missionaries under the Board who are proclaiming the full gospel as it is set forth in the whole Word of God. Those faithful missionaries of the Cross should not be allowed to suffer because of the faults of the administrative agency under which they stand. Until some truly evangelical agency is formed to care for those faithful missionaries, evangelical people cannot withhold their support of the present Board.

But has the time not come for the establishment of a truly evangelical missionary agency in the Presbyterian Church -- an agency to which evangelical Christians can contribute, not with hesitation and distrust, but with all confidence and joy, an agency which shall keep clear of entangling alliances and shall proclaim the full glories of the Reformed Faith as they are found in the Word of God? The question may well be raised; it may well be commended to the prayerful consideration of that large body of Christian laymen in our Church who love their Bibles and the crucified Saviour set forth therein, who know that the "principles of Jesus" will never save the world -- nor what Dr. Speer calls his "redeeming life" (1) -- but only His precious redeeming blood, who are not seeking the patronizing testimony of non-Christian men, which Dr. Speer rehearses at such length, but who are willing to bear the offense of the Cross.

If such an evangelical agency is formed, its virtue must be not merely negative but positive; it must not only avoid denying the gospel, but it must preach the gospel in all its fullness and in all its power. One fundamental vice underlies the defense of the present Board; its representatives seem to think that the burden of proof is to be placed upon those who deny that the Board is sounding an evangelical note. "Be definite in your charges", they say in effect; "point out individual missionaries against whom charges of

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(1) The relation of the Foreign Missionary Enterprise to the World Situation of Today," in Christian Students and World Problems, 1924, p. 139.

heresy can be preferred, or else keep silent with your criticism and continue your support." What is the trouble with such a line of defense? Is it not that the defense is negative merely? The assumption seems to be that if the missionaries or the secretaries of the Board cannot be proved to be saying that which is contrary to the gospel of Christ, then all is well. But cannot these gentlemen really understand any better than that the point of view of evangelical Christians in our Church? Cannot they understand that what evangelical Christians demand is not an agency that avoids denying the gospel of the Cross of Christ, that perhaps pays perfunctory lip service to it on explicit demand, but an agency that is on fire with that gospel, that never for one moment keeps it in the background, that preaches it in season and out of season, that combats what is contradictory to it, that presents it as the only way of salvation for lost and dying men? If in answer to the present paper Dr. Speer should affirm his belief in the atonement of Christ -- that heart of the gospel which, so far as we have been able to observe, he has in his recent books dealt with only to bring it into connection with the death of soldiers in the war, or otherwise to explain it away -- if he should affirm his belief in the virgin birth of Christ, and in the other four basic elements of our faith to which the Auburn Affirmationists have done despite, if even he should affirm his conviction of the necessity of these beliefs, still our objections would not really be removed. What we long for is not a missionary agency that affirms belief in the essential things of the faith when asked to do so, but a missionary agency that proclaims those things joyously, spontaneously, and all the time. The difference here concerns the question where the really central emphasis is to be placed. It is not merely a difference of the mind, but a difference of the heart. What is the real impact of our Foreign Board upon the world? Is it the preaching of Christ crucified -- not in some pale modern sense, not as a thing upon which new light is shed by the death of soldiers in the war, but as a blessed mystery revealed in the Word of God? If it is, then we can support that Board? But if not, we must seek some other agency that will proclaim this thing which to us is the breath of life. Christ has bought us with His own precious blood. Woe be to us if we proclaim, either by our words or by our gifts, some other gospel than the gospel of the Cross. And may God show us how we can best proclaim that gospel through the length and breadth of the world!